

TRAVELS
Before
THE FLOOD.

*An interesting Oriental Record of men
and manners in the antediluvian world,
interpreted in Fourteen Evening Conversations
between the Caliph of Bagdad & his Court.*

Translated from the Arabic.



Vol 1.

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INTRODUCTION

ACCORDING TO

B E N H A F I,

AND THE

ARABIC TRADITIONS.

AFTER the severe and active sages and conquerors who succeeded the Great Prophet in the caliphate, there was one whose natural love of peace could not but make him find out the secret of governing Asia with undisturbed ease. His Viziers and his favourites clearly demonstrated to him, that the only reason why his predecessors had conquered such immense

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tracts

tracts of land, and sacrificed so many hundred thousand lives, was, to render his days tranquil, happy and prosperous. The Caliph never contradicted their arguments ; and, had the strength of his body and the wit of his story-tellers been inexhaustible, he would in all probability have transmigrated to the abode of his fathers, with the reputation of having himself done no good, and no bad ; and of having neither prevented that, nor promoted this. Courtiers and priests may prove that these are the best governments. The Caliph, however, feeling his nerves somewhat debilitated by indolence and enjoyment, and the wits who surrounded him having so much drained the store of their marvellous tales as to be obliged to repeat them over again, all those who reigned in his sacred and mighty name,

name, and were strongly leagued together like so many robbers against humanity, now found themselves extremely embarrassed, as the Caliph, who could not bear those stale repetitions, and had not hitherto troubled himself with the active concerns of his government, began to ask such questions as, on the part of a man of forty, who had let others reign for him upwards of twenty years, must be deemed very singular. It appeared that he, who had hitherto sat on the throne quite incurious, wished on a sudden to know why he sat upon this throne, and what business he really had in this world? Even thus far can relaxation from pleasure and entertainment bring a monarch!

The Caliph was a man of great piety, a zealous worshipper of God, and a faithful disciple of Mahomet his

prophet. The only book he knew was the Koran, whose words were always streaming in the most solemn tone from his lips, because its spirit dwelt wholly in his heart. The cabal of his Viziers, less orthodox than their master, knew that he neither lacked genius nor understanding, and that the want of resoluteness was his principal defect. They were now under great apprehension lest some one of their own junto should be ambitious and faithless enough to rouse entirely that energetic faculty of the mind, that dangerous and half-dormant enemy, whom they had hitherto carefully endeavoured to keep under. They surely did not fear that the man who had so long indulged his body, that his mind seemed at times to have coalesced with it, should all at once become an active ruler; but all they dreaded was,

was, that one among them might, by the invention of some new juggle, render himself sole master of the Sovereign of Asia. These cares and anxieties lasted a whole month; one Vizier watched the other; sleep and rest had forsaken them all. Intrigue, baseness, hypocrisy and pride, inflamed by fear, jealousy and envy, acted a farce so comico-tragical, that, had it been possible for the Caliph's subjects to look into the heart of their oppressors, it would at least have afforded them some small consolation for their sufferings. *Alas!* the situation of a courtier, whose bark does not scud before the wind of princely favour, or happens in her proud course to strike upon some shoal, is melancholy indeed! and it certainly is a proof of the *innate depravity* of men, if they rejoice at such a *moving scene*. To

comfort the *loyal* and *well-disposed*, Hazard, the obscurest and most decisive of all beings in the scale of human affairs, extricated the care-worn statesmen from the alarming puzzle they were in. But it was only for a short time ; and as the present moment is no where more consulted than at courts, so the Viziers thought already to have gained every thing.

There was at this period loitering about Bagdad one Ben Hafi, whom the people used to nickname the *wise fool* ; two qualities of the mind, which, contradictory as they will appear at first sight, are nevertheless frequently blended together. Perhaps, too, the people of Bagdad called him so, because he chose not to be *wise* in their way, though he might have got more by this method than by his own. All his treasure, all his wealth, was a rare manu-

manuscript, written in peculiar characters, and intituled *Travels before the Flood*, from which, for a day's meal or a night's lodging, he would relate something now to one, then to the other. The First Cadi got intelligence from his emissaries and spies, of the singular method in which this man earned his livelihood *.

The First Cadi †, who, by virtue of his official capacity, could not but find

* Though the editor of the present work cannot allow the merit of inventing the *police of spies* to his contemporaries, yet he may well flatter their vanity with having brought this rough invention of the ancients to the highest pitch of modern perfection, so that it is become a characteristic sign of a *good and well-regulated* government.

† The *First Cadi* among the Turks is the chief magistrate of the police of the whole empire.

something seditious or treasonable against the Koran or the Caliph in the conduct of the poor *wise fool*, ordered him, from prudential motives, to be immediately seized and thrown into prison. Like a true statesman he was well aware, that if this poor fool was really a dangerous person, he had put it out of his power to do mischief, and that if he were found not guilty, he would always have time enough to do him justice. A man of such nice penetration, though he lived many centuries back, might also have been a useful member of administration in our present governments; but we do not presume, by this remark, to teach our First Cadis what would be their duty in such cases, since their sagacity has proved how far they *dare* go.

Fortunately for Ben Hafi, the Chief Cadi mentioned him accidentally to
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the Grand Vizier, who had no sooner heard the words "*Travels before the Flood*" and a *wise fool*, than he said to himself: "This fellow will most likely draw us out from the perplexity we are in: if he be a fool, and still wise, he must doubtless know how to entertain a monarch that is grown somewhat relaxed, without its doing either good or harm."

The Grand Vizier saw and heard Ben Hafi, turned over the leaves of his wonderful manuscript, shook his head at the odd and confused characters, and smiled at him, while the latter surveyed his countenance with a cold and stern look. The Grand Vizier then rolled up the manuscript, took it under his arm, beckoned Ben Hafi to follow, saying to him by the way: "Hafi, as much foolish wisdom as you please, but beware of that which
is

is serious. The former will fetch you gold and the Grand Vizier's favour, the latter the Caliph's displeasure, as it would be tedious, and perhaps oblige his servant at last to reward you with a halter."

After this very plain intimation, the Grand Vizier introduced him to the Caliph, to whom he shewed the manuscript, telling him what it contained, and every thing he had heard of the *wise fool*.

While the Caliph was carefully examining the manuscript, Ben Hafi had time enough to observe him. His friendly and gentle mien, and his fine and venerable form, won him Ben Hafi's heart, who now conceived so many bold thoughts respecting the Prince of Believers, as the presence of the Vizier himself could not overawe.—Soon the Caliph asked him a
number

number of questions, such as, "How he came by the manuscript? In what language it was written? Who was the author of it? How it could escape destruction by the flood? Whether it were not perhaps a mere fiction? Don't be afraid, Hafi," added his Highness, "to confess the truth to me, for I have my reasons to like it still better if it be a fiction." Ben Hafi assured the Caliph that the manuscript contained the truth, and exhibited a genuine picture of the earth and her inhabitants, at the period immediately preceding the flood.

The Caliph. I am afraid this picture of mankind will be as little entertaining as that which they present after the flood. But answer my questions.

Ben Hafi. This wonderful manuscript has been dug out from the ground of the *old mountain*, deeply buried below

low a rock, by a sage of Hindostan, many centuries after the deluge. By the inspiration of a superior spirit, this sage learned to decypher the contents, or said at least he could do it. The manuscript continued to be hereditary in his family, and always would the father teach his first-born the sense of this curious record. In my wanderings through Hindostan, I happened to make acquaintance with the person who was then in possession of the manuscript, and filched from him the key to the secret expression of these characters. I left him shortly after, and was surprised to find in the bag in which I carried my provisions, the rare original of the manuscript itself. Perhaps the good sage, who found my eagerness so great, wanted agreeably to surprise me with this present; perhaps, too, fate had decreed that it should

should forthwith cease to be the sole and limited property of one man; perhaps fate even willed, that the poor and wandering Ben Hafi should thereby find the term of his miserable peregrinations at the Caliph's court. Now the characters or signs that you see here, are signs, and no language, or rather a sensual demonstration of objects. He, therefore, who can point out these signs, and understands to divide and combine each of them by three and seven, and seven by three, and one by three, and three by one, and nine by three, and three by nine, he likewise knows the signification and sense of the signs, be he Arab, Persian, or Hindoo. The root lies in the odds, and the root's spirit in the units.

The Caliph. Enough of this! You had better tell me what the manuscript contains.

Ben

Ben Hafi. I told you already that it contains travels and histories before the flood. They are the travels of Mahal, the brother-in-law of Noah the prophet ; or the history of men, and their rulers, previous to the deluge.

The Caliph. Have not I been telling you once that I cannot bear histories, the true ones I mean? Give me fabulous tales, stories ! These alone teach wisdom, convey instruction, expose not the narrator to be suspected of wishing to teach his superiors better, tickle the imagination, and lull one to sleep. Of tales the hearer may believe what he chooses ; and if you relate something mean of Sultans and the Ministers their servants, we may suppose it to be the invention of some idle fool, or of some peevish malecontent. So if you wish me to hear those
travels,

travels, you must relate them in the shape of tales. Then if any thing offends or displeases me, I may think or say, 'Tis nothing but a story!

Ben Hafi. I will obey your will as far as my genius will allow it. But your highness must first grant me conditions.

The Caliph. Conditions! Who durst make any but myself? Hear then those which I lay down: I shall interrupt you as often as I shall please, make my remarks and comments upon all you say, sleep whenever I like, and during my sleep you shall continue your story, which, on my awaking, will give me the advantage to find immediately thoughts before me, that will cost me no farther trouble than to receive them.

Ben Hafi. I submit, but still insist on my own conditions, should it even
make

make me incur your highness's displeasure.

The Caliph. Let me hear them.

Ben Hafi. You will permit me to interweave these travels or tales with as many remarks and comments of my own wisdom and folly as I shall think proper, should they be ever so foreign to the subject. No philosopher loves to hear himself so well as I do; and rather than suffer myself to be silenced, I would be strangled. You will also permit me to begin or leave off when I like, and hear my tales to the end, should they prove ever so tiresome. If your highness does not approve of these conditions, I will roll up the manuscript, and you may dispose of me as you please.

The Caliph. And dost not thou fear him, that commands over life and death here?

Ben Hafi. Not I, indeed; I have my particular reasons for it.

The Caliph. And what are they?

Ben Hafi. I believe, that none but the bad feel themselves, and continue after this life; that the good sleep without dreams or recollection; and the sooner I shall reach the region where I shall awake no more, where I shall forget what I have been, the better it will be.

The Caliph. Thou speakest nonsense, man: but God is great! “*For by the angels who direct the events of the world only one blast of the trumpet shall resound, and the graves shall open themselves, and the unjust shall call: Alas too is us! the day of judgment is come! Then shall the earth be moved from its place, the mountains shall be beat in pieces, and vanish in dust. On that day the inevitable hour of judgment*
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shall come. Then the sun shall be folded up, the brilliant stars become extinct, and the heavens be torn. The sea shall boil, the ferocious beasts shall gather into herds, the ten months bearing camel shall not be minded, the souls again be united with the bodies, the tombs open, and the dead come forth into life. Then every one's book shall be opened, and justice be done unto each, according to his doings. !"*

Ben Hafi. God is great and just, and therefore I fear nothing.—If you will not grant me these conditions, I put up the manuscript.

The Caliph to the Grand Vizier. What kind of a man have you introduced to me ?

The Grand Vizier. The people call

* All the parts printed in italics are passages taken from the Koran.

him the *wise fool*: but you may boldly grant him what he desires; only one wink from you will strike him dumb.

The Caliph. Well, I grant you all you asked. The Vizier shall give you decent garments, that you may appear before me to-morrow evening with the manuscript. But hark'ee, I premise that it contains nothing that offends the Koran.

Ben Hafi. It will only serve to glorify it.

FIRST EVENING.

THE Caliph was reclining on his sofa : at his feet sat Masul, a deaf old eunuch, who having attended his master from his earliest infancy, the latter could never be without him : facing the Caliph, to the right, stood the Grand Vizier in reverential awe : behind this minister was the Caliph's first physician ; and at some farther distance the principal personages and servants of the court and state, whom in Europe we call lords in waiting, lords of the bed-chamber, grooms, pensioners, &c.

Ben

Ben Hafi, placed with his manuscript at a little table, to the left of the Sultan, thrice bowed to his Highness in solemn gravity, and thus began :

Since I am at liberty to relate quite in my own way Mahal's travels before the flood, or rather tales before the flood, as the Lord of believers desires me to style them, I will premise the following three remarks :

In the first place, as the men and the sultans who will appear in them have all lived before the flood, it cannot be my intention to give offence to any of those who are now living or present here, even should the picture of this or that personage of the *aboriginal* world bear as strong a resemblance to this or that personage after the flood, as if they had sat for it to Mahal. The most ancient families of

the East cannot apply any thing of that which shall be related, to themselves ; because it is notorious, that, as the ancient world owes its origin only to one man, so does the modern world likewise.

The Caliph. I know what you mean, and command you silence upon it. It is much the best way to leave some things in the dark. If you were to say for instance, that all of us here, poor deaf Masul not excepted, sprang from *one* and the *same* man, some might take it into their head to think that we are all of equal pedigree : now this would set numbers agog, and whom would it avail, pray ?

My Hafi. The philosopher, my friend. But remember our agreement, and do not turn a robber upon poor Masul. This remark belongs to me, and nobody shall take it from

me, not even your Highness, that commands millions. Thoughts are a property to which omnipotence itself forbears to make pretension, since it breathed a thinking spirit into man's body.

Ben Hafi spoke this in such solemn earnest, that all present looked at one another, seeming to ask how these words would be received : but the Caliph said to him : *Peace be with thee!* and bid him go on.

Ben Hafi. A few days ago I met a barber on the river Tygris, who had, like me, overrun the wide world, and was then returning home. I asked him how matters went abroad, and he answered : " Much the same, brother, as among us." This is my second remark : and some wit, at the conclusion of Mahal's travels, may perhaps say : " It was then as it now is."

The Caliph. O the tattler ! Begin your tales, or I shall fall asleep.

Ben Hafi. Lord of believers, remember our conditions, and hear my third remark : Though the flood has washed away all the weeds of the old world, yet there still remained, as you will have observed, here and there some seeds of them in the earth, and nothing but the fire will probably purge it entirely some day.

The Caliph. Then all will be believers !

Ben Hafi. I'll now begin :

No sooner had a few men begun to breathe on this lump of earth, than they separated into two classes, the good and the bad : and what might the least have been expected of beings who had seen their creator with their eyes, and heard him with their ears, the good soon associated with the bad, and
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proceeded so far at last, as to outdo these in wickedness and degeneracy.

The Caliph. A moment, Ben Hafi! How comes it that men are now-a-days so wicked, while their race is turned grey with age, and was before the flood like a tender suckling at the breast of its nurse? Why is there more of the bad than of the good?

The Grand Vizier. This arises from the evil innate in man; their race ought therefore to be ruled with an iron sceptre.

The Caliph. I know your maxim, Vizier; but I want Ben Hafi to answer me.

Ben Hafi. If you want a definite answer, ask the Prophet and the interpreters of the holy book; they have a reply to every question.

The Caliph. So it is. God is great, and this is one of his secrets. “He

said to the angels : I will put in man a representative upon the earth ! They answer : Will you put one on the earth, that he shall do bad on it, and shed blood ? Yet we worship and praise thee. God said : Verily I know that which is bidden from you."

Ben Hafi. And this solves the question. Cain slew his pious brother Abel ; God drove the murderer into misery ; he fled from the mountain of innocence into the vallies, and settled there. Adam begat a son, and called his name Seth. The generation of Seth lived upon the old mountain, remained faithful to the Lord, lived in simplicity and innocence, and fed on the fruits of the earth and the milk of their flocks. For this the Lord was pleased with them, and called them his children. There were neither sages, artists, judges, nor sultans among them ;

them ; every one cared only for what was most necessary ; none reasoned about his being ; and each was his own judge and sultan, because he acted in the true spirit of man.

The Caliph. I know very well that people may live without doing any thing but eat, drink and sleep ; but how they can live without sultans and judges, or how a man should at once be sultan and subject to himself, is what I cannot conceive. Say what you please, their life cannot have been a very pleasant one ; and I foresee, that for this very reason it cannot have been of long duration.

Ben Hafi. If the descendants of Seth increased in the mountains, those of Cain multiplied much more in the valleys, which they soon rendered flourishing by their skill and industry. Cain laid the first foundation of the
evil,

evil, by introducing property. By the *mine* and *thine*, that fratricide dedicated the earth and its produce to violence and rapine, and its tenants to murder. He built dwellings, appointed judges, and assigned to man for his food the flesh and blood of the animals, his half-kin. His successors went farther; they tore the ores from the bowels of the earth, built cities, collected in thronged masses, forced the earth to return seeds an hundred fold, broke the steed, navigated the waters, and animated with their breath and fingers, the metal, the wood and the entrails of the animals, to make them resound in voluptuous and harmonious tones. The arts, whose mother was want, were soon succeeded by the inventions of luxury; and soon the too artful understanding created a toy for fancy, and this toy was called
know-

knowledge. Seth's offspring looked down from the mountain into the smiling vallies, and saw the rich fields, the perfuming and shady gardens, the thick and cool groves, the glassy lakes and the serpentine rivers, the cities and their splendid towers. They beheld the inhabitants roving through the meads, walking in the gardens and groves, fly on the back of the swift steed, and glide on the water's surface in full sail. By and by they approached timidly the prodigies they had so long gazed at, heard from afar the magic sounds of their music, their merry shouts, and the sweet voluptuous songs of the daughters of Cain. Attracted by the magic images and sounds, they stole nearer. They viewed the charming daughters of the vallies painted and embellished by the artist's inventive hand, taught by the
 desire

desire of pleasing, to trip in luxurious
 circles, with measured step, at the
 soft fluttering of the flutes, at the clear
 sound of the cymba's, and the still
 sweeter melodies of their companions.
 Many of the children of Seth thus forgot
 to return; others went back to the old
 mountain, and, having imbibed the dan-
 gerous poison into their minds, painted
 in words of fire what they had seen. But
 what operated more than words upon
 the astonished hearers, was the glow-
 ing desire which sparkled in the eyes
 of the narrators, and the disgust and
 reluctance with which they surveyed
 every thing around them. They com-
 pared their situation with that of the
 inhabitants of the vallies, till they found
 the former quite insupportable. The
 posterity of Seth then mixed with the
 descendants of the fratricide Cain; and
 of this mixture of the children of God
 with

with the children of the flesh, or of innocence with knowledge and luxury, there sprang the mighty men of the earth, her tyrants and her despoilers. Thus, Lord of believers, did in the first days of the world cultivation devour innocence.

The Caliph. I am sorry for it ; but suppose this had not happened, how would it be then ?

Ben Hafi. We still should live in the simplicity of our hearts, and poor Ben Hafi would have no travels before the flood to recount as tales, because there would either have been no flood at all, or nothing at least would have happened before it worth relating.

The Caliph. Then, since it happened, it must have been, and since it has been, God would have it, and God is great ! As a pious man, I
could

could wish it had not been, and we should still live in innocence. But if I consider that there would be nothing of all those things which now give me delight, and that, on a footing with the least of my slaves, I should be obliged to wander upon a mountain without house or shelter, and to browse grass and herbs like the goat—I am of a different opinion. What is your sentiment of ignorance and knowledge?

Ben Hafi. This question is too intricate and too momentous for me to answer. All I know is this: I have seen rough simplicity walk about in flaky skins, and refined crime rustle in silks; what was between them was not much better than any other medium. But I must proceed—

In the year one thousand five hundred and seventy-five after the creation, there

there lived only one Mussulman with his family upon the old mountain.

The Caliph. A Mussulman before the flood !—hey ?

Ben Hafi. He was one in spirit ! Did not Noah believe in a God, and does not Mahomet, his apostle, call him his prophet ?—This Noah was the second father of mortal men. The descendants of Seth gradually went down into the vallies, scattered east, west, south and north, through the country, and built cities and villages. They soon forgot God, committed sin, and trembled under the tyrants whom Cain's sons begat with their daughters, and whom they raised masters and judges above them. As the mighty men now felt their strength and power, raged, and became constantly more formidable by terror, a voice was heard from a dark cavern :

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“That no one should resist the mighty; because the sons of God, the protectors of men, who spring from the Lord, had begotten them, inflamed with the beauty of the daughters of Seth; and instructed the mothers in the secret arts, by which their sons held the reins of government.” The mighty of the earth found this saying subservient to their ends; they now called themselves sons of the angels, and said aloud: “Our mighty fathers have granted us spirit, understanding, power and enchantment, to fill their places, in guiding, protecting and governing mankind.” The fools who had forsaken God and true wisdom, gave credit to the words of their rulers, who took advantage of their silliness, according to their heart’s pleasure, which knows no bounds if there be no fear to control it.

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The Grand Vizier cast a significant look on Ben Hafi, and was about to speak, when the Caliph got the start of him.

The Caliph. Very true, Ben Hafi; this is no tale, but the best thing I heard come from thy mouth. I feel all this in myself. Chamberlain, bring the wise fool a thousand golden *derbems*, he shall take them home with him.—Tell me, do not I guide and rule all Asia? Is it the mere work of mortals, that I who am born like you, not a bit wiser or stronger than yourselves, should without trouble keep in order so immense, so different-minded and malicious a multitude, that each of you does what I will, and is convinced that none but me dares will? And whence comes it, that I always will that which is best and the most salutary, and that only

men of your kind corrupt what I plan ? It comes from God, who knows that all flows pure and worthy of my origin from my devoted heart, and that the hands of my slaves alone can pollute it.

None of those present had any objection to urge to the Sultan's argument ; and the Grand Vizier seemed to be reverentially impressed with its force. Ben Hafi, looking at his Highness with amazement, and thanking him for the *derbems*, continued :

Noáh, his sons and daughters never turned their eyes to the seducing valleys ; the only one of his family, who looked down curious and inquisitive, was Mahal, his brother-in-law. This Mahal was one of those people, who are not satisfied that they exist and live happy, but who also want to know why, to what end they exist,
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and whether they are happy in the right manner, or may become happier and better still in another way. He was also of a violent, peevish and obstinate temper, and bore in his bosom the seeds of doubts, which were the more tormenting to him, since he was equally deficient in bright intellect, and in the true faith that consists in entire resignation. To him it appeared very strange, that old Noah should thus clamber and shift about upon a mountain, timidly shunning and secluding himself from all the rest of human kind. Did he ask Noah why he did so, he would answer him: "Such is the will of the God of our fathers. Those have forsaken him, and should we forsake him, too, and none of this mortal race be his adherent?"

The more decisive such an answer

must appear, the less will it satisfy the curious enquirer. The first transient thought respecting the difference between Noah's family and the inhabitants of the vallies had rendered Mahal unsusceptible of pure happiness. Now one thought engendered another, and he fared no better than all reasoners; he began with soft and timorous doubts, and terminated in murmurs and dispiritedness. He had heard a great deal of the inhabitants of the cities; the fame of their mighty men and their exploits had also reached his ears; he thought them huge giants, and reflected upon their deeds in awful admiration.

One day he said to his brother-in-law: "I am tired of living here; the thorn of disquietude has pricked my heart, and I cannot extract it. All is uniform here, and I taste as little
relish.

relish of life as our forefathers, that sleep yonder deep in the earth. Nor have I more knowledge than the sheep which I drive to the pasture ground. I will descend to our brothers in the vallies, and learn the wisdom of men. I will see with my own eyes those mighty giants, those sons of God, whom the mighty of the heavens have begotten with the daughters of our blood. I long to witness how they govern the earth and command mankind that dwell on it."

Noah was wroth and spake: "Fool! the thorn that sticks in thy heart is the lust after flesh, which thyself has brought forth! Go and follow it, and come back with repentance, if thou shalt not be equal unto them whose wisdom thou covetest. But why dost thou blaspheme God before me, and

the powers he has given to guide and protect men? The mighty whom thou callest giants and sons of God; are men like others; their might and strength consist in their cunning and wickedness, and in the corruption of those over whom they now rule by their own power. The offspring of the fratricide begat them with the daughters of our fathers; because, when these approached men, they learned all their turbulent spirit had invented, became like them, and forsook God; and because their fathers were once called children of God, because they were such by their piety, they invented the rash words which now mislead thee."

Mahal returned: "Abuse me not, brother, in thine ire! Man could not give to himself this inventive spirit, nor can he exceed his powers. The lion
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and the bear are strong, the horse and the mountain goat fleet, and man is ingenious. What I hear and see from afar, proves to me that the mighty of the earth must be sons of God and giants. I see the plain covered with their numberless dwellings, I see them fly on strong steeds with the velocity of the wind. Often have I heard sounds enter my listening ear, that made my heart vibrate and yearn, that melted and elevated it. They have subdued all; them obey the hard earth, the flowing water, and the inconstant air, with all they bear and support. Yes, the mighty must be giants, armed with the force of the storm. How could they else perform such grand, prodigious achievements? and how should the rest, were they equal to them, bear their power? I long to see their life, and to learn if God is
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among them : and if he be, why should we live parted from those that are of the same blood as ourselves ?”

Noah, dreading lest the bold language of his brother-in-law should poison the minds of his sons and daughters, left Mahal, who soon after descended from the mountain with Milka, his fair daughter, and remained at its foot. Here he staid for some days concealed in a cavern, as the closer view of the city of Enoch, which Cain had founded, bewildered and overawed his spirits. In the third night, he was roused from his sleep by the trotting and neighing of horses. The blaze of torches suddenly illumined his cavern ; a troop of men armed with swords and lances rushed in, searched every part of the hole, saw his blooming daughter, seized her, and disappeared with their booty.

Mahal,

Mahal, half overwhelmed with grief and despair, tore his garments and pulled out the hair of his head. In his fright he hastened back upon the old mountain, and murmured in his mind : “ Lord, why didst thou suffer this ? Why didst thou give birth to the mighty ? ”

When Mahal overlooked the plain at the return of light, his mind was gloomier than the night, his heart swelled with resentment, his thoughts multiplied more and more, and multiplicity increased their confusion. He threw himself on the ground beneath the shade of a cypress, grumbled and complained. The next day he accosted Noah in deep dejection, and related with bitterness the disaster that had befallen him.

Noah replied : “ Thus hast thou known the mighty of the earth, and
the

the Lord has chastised thee." "Alas," quoth Mahal, "what has the damsel done, to let her fall into the hands of the mighty? What wretched consolation is this, brother! Do not the mighty live before his countenance, like us? Do not they do as their hearts desire, and are great in power and authority? Does he not protect them, and oblige us to hide ourselves from their face?"

Mahal continued to murmur. When twilight came, a rustling was heard in the tops of the trees, and there was felt a gentle shaking of the earth. Noah exclaimed: "The Lord is walking on the mountain!" He then fell down, and worshipped. But Mahal did not prostrate himself, and his mind remained gloomy, as the voice of the Lord called out: "Why quarrel ye, men of the mountain?"—"Lord,"

“Lord,” cried Noah, “forgive me and him! We quarrel for the sake of those who live in the cities: teach him and me!”

And the Lord's voice resounded stronger: “Shall I teach him whom I have so formed that he may be his own teacher? Have I not put a spirit over him to be his guard and judge, whom he cannot benumb or belie? Have I not formed his tongue to speak, that he may give life to his thoughts? Have I not done every thing in his behalf, by teaching him to distinguish himself from all that surrounds him, that he might not take himself to be all one and the same with that which surrounds him? Have I not thereby connected him with me? But the race of men has forsaken me, and is ripening fast unto destruction. Behold, Noah, thy very brother

brother is become a fool. Men will no longer be guided by my spirit; they live after the senses of their flesh. They form and create now with their hands and their minds, and deem themselves gods. They want to know all; every one pursues enjoyment, fame and presumption, idols, whom they have generated with lust and pride. I created them all and made them born equal; but they have distinguished themselves by ranks, and the great among the people believe themselves better born. Who is great before me? Tyrants now govern mankind by terror, and mankind tremble before the son of the dust, who arrogantly says he holds his power from me. Who is mighty before me? All their imaginations and efforts are evil: the suckling learns it from the old ones, and
grows

grows up to do, and suffer evil. They feed on the blood and flesh of the living, and murder one another from ambition and covetousness. Truly it repents me now that I have made man. The earth is horrid to me, it is covered with blood. Yet I will still give a short respite to men, to see if they return to the simple and innocent course of life, which Noah my son leads. If they do not return to me, I will destroy from off the earth both man and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls in the air."

Noah was silent, and worshipped. And Mahal said: "Pardon me, if I dare speak as the spirit prompts me which thou hast implanted into my heart. It repenteth thee to have made men! Thou wilt destroy them all with the guiltless animals. Yet they

they all are thy work, and not their own! If they be corrupt, why dost thou not mend them by words, signs, or deed? O Lord, why hast thou made men so that it should repent thee to have made them?"

The Caliph. A bold, rash question! My angel *, make me quickly forget it.—But what did God answer?

Ben Hafi. He was silent, and a dark cloud covered, for a moment, his bright countenance.

The Caliph. Had your foolish Mahal dared to ask me any question why I did so or so, he should not have got off so easily.

Ben Hafi. You are only a ruler in the flesh; and if the Lord were of the

* The Mahometans believe, that two guardian angels or gemi are always placed on each side of a man, and relieved by others every day.

same mind as the majority of our sultans and judges, it would go very badly with the sultans, sheiks, judges, viziers, nay with the philosophers themselves. I should then hardly have travels before the flood to relate to your Highness.

The Caliph. I said more than I meant. But God is great!

Ben Hafi. And the Lord spake again unto Noah: "My son Noah! Thy brother Mahal loathes the peace of innocence, his heart has ceased to be pure and simple, and he covets the wisdom of men. Let him descend among them, learn their wisdom, discover the source of their wickedness and arrogance, and judge between me and them, and between himself, me, and them. Perhaps, since he is so eager to censure, he may convert them. Let Mahal go among them,

for he can no longer live among the innocent; and this is the first sad gain which the enquirer earns.—Go, Mahal! as far as men inhabit the earth, and pollute it with horrors. Mark, by means of the characters which they will teach thee, all thou shalt see, hear, feel, do, think, and speak; what their counsellors deliberate, what their rulers perform, and their sages say. The more foolish they are, the wiser do they think themselves. Then return to this spot, read what thou hast noted down, and I will ask thee what they deserve, and what is the cause of thy and their folly.”

Mahal now felt himself in a lethargy of tormenting darkness. Noah returned to his family, and slept the gentle sleep of peace, which I wish you likewise, Prince of Believers,

I

for

for your patient hearing of my introduction to Mahal's travels.

Ben Hafi now rolled up his manuscript, and the Caliph dismissed him, expressing his hopes, that his next night's tale would be more entertaining.

The Grand Vizier, who had hitherto listened to Hafi with great attention, and thought himself often smartly hit off, was glad to find that the Caliph took all in good part. He resolved to be more watchful over the narrator; and, should he be unable to attend, to appoint a listener that should be qualified to feel the right sense of the tales. That this was a prudent resolution, none will doubt who knows the consequences that may arise from the manner in which a tale may be told at court.

SECOND EVENING.

BEN HAFI appeared at the hour appointed, unrolled his manuscript, and began :

Mahal, awaking from his disturbed and tormenting sleep, took a fullen and unfriendly leave of Noah, and hastened down the mountain. He was a man of a tall and stately form, and just in the full vigour of serious manhood. His copious black beard curled itself in locks about his round chin, his cheeks wore the bloom of rosy health, and his fiery eyes sparkled lively and boldly below their fair-drawn

drawn arches. He that had seen him would have said, that rocky obstinacy formed his wrinkling front; but what particularly distinguished him in the countries through which he roamed, was his bold energetic ravenness, and the novelty and oddities of his conduct.

The Caliph. I suppose he was an oddity in his behaviour to princes, because those things are not learnt in the mountains. Don't I guess right?

Ben Hafi. If Mahal, please your highness, learns but this, he will cease to be an oddity in every thing. He was an oddity to dissimulation: and to men that live in society, to whom this art is become second nature, there cannot be a more ludicrous and diverting phenomenon than a man who does not know how to live in their way.

The Caliph. Now I understand you. He was a raw bumpkin. Among the Turks of my life-guards there are many such awkward and rustic fellows. —Proceed.

Ben Hafi. The following day Mahal ventured to perambulate the fields covered with ripening seeds ; but he still passed warily by the scattered rural habitations. He spent the night in a thick wood, awoke amidst the singing of birds, and the soft breezes of the morning winds. Soon his looks explored the wood, when he suddenly discovered, among a circle of trees, upon an eminence, a being of a dazzling white. His spirit was awed, he believed it was one of the mighty who governed the wood and the scattered cots, and he was going to take flight, when curiosity arrested his steps. He now attempted to look oftener and
longer

longer at his object ; and perceiving at last, that the dazzling white being would not stir, and continued always in the same attitude, he gradually stole nearer, walking cautiously on his toes, for fear of rousing the being from its meditations, making it perceive, grow angry at, and perhaps punish him. He took his station behind a bush, and watched. It was with astonishment he observed the birds flutter about the being, and some of them alight upon different parts of its body. The desire of recognizing it now drove him forward ; he hastened with a quick pace towards the object, and stood suddenly and almost motionless, with staring looks, with a beating heart, and his respiration half obstructed, before a being of his own kind, only taller, quite naked, and of a dazzling white. The fulness of its

bosom, and the charming softness
 of its smile, made him take it for
 a woman ; and believing she smiled at
 him, his respiration grew free again,
 his limbs ceased to be benumbed, and
 quaking fear was changed into agree-
 able surprise. His alarms were not
 however done away entirely ; for the
 figure being so much elevated above
 him, he thought, where there are tall
 women there must be men much tall-
 er, and surely this must be one of the
 daughters of the mighty of heaven.
 He now cast humble and suppliant
 looks upon the gently smiling female,
 stammered at last a few faltering
 words, and told her with confidence
 whence he came and what he sought.
 The figure neither changed mien nor
 posture. Mahal stood quite perplex-
 ed, and began to pause : “ It is a being
 of my kind,” said he at last, “ only
 taller ;

taller; and though its flesh be whiter than mine, it still is flesh. All its limbs are shaped like mine. Its eyes speak, its mouth lives, and its lips are open for conversation.—They are actually speaking, but only I can't perceive the sounds of the words. Yes, it is a being like me; and since it favours me with such amiable smiles, I will approach it, and touch its knees, with prayers."

He now stretched forth his hand—

The Caliph. O the fool! He ought to have done this long ago, and he would immediately have felt of what stuff the thing was made. Shall I now tell you what it was that outwitted this Mahal?

It may be easily conceived that all the courtiers, except Ben Hafi, solicited the Caliph to explain.

The Caliph. Why, it was a statue; and I'm afraid we are got among idolaters.

laters. I tell you more, the statue was of white marble, and represented the sultaness of the country.

The whole court, except the wise fool, praised and admired the Caliph's ingenuity and penetration.

Ben Hafi. Mahal put forth his hand, felt a cold body, and shrunk back with such trepidation as the shepherd must feel, who, grasping his crook, feels a serpent entwine his arm in lieu of it. He uttered a shriek :
 "The being is dead !"

The Caliph. O the blockhead ! Don't he perceive yet, that it is marble ? A pretty chap indeed, to write travels for the Lord !

Ben Hafi. As he wanted that quality for which your highness is so much praised, he would have remained in his astonishment much longer, had not the approach of music, vocal and instru-

instrumental, extricated him from it. A great number of young men and virgins walked two by two, into the circus formed by the trees, laid hold of each other's hands, and danced in close rows about the being, to the sound of music and song. They then chanted with one voice a solemn hymn, and laid down their garlands at the feet of the sweet-smiling figure. Mahal stood as immoveable within the circle, as the statue upon its pedestal. The graceful melody of the gay, blooming and fine-drest female singers and dancers had enraptured his ears, and fascinated his heart. When they had done singing, the whole youthful troop thronged near their astonished spectator. They asked him who he was, and he answered their questions. A joyful welcome, intermixed with derision of the fools on the old mountain, and with
lively

lively pictures of the happiness of the vallies, next ensued. The damsels played with their tender white fingers among the black curls of his beard, and stroked his ruddy cheeks; but still his mind was so lost in amazement at and occupied with the being that stood before him, and to whom the sprightly band had paid such homage, that his first enquiries were entirely concerning it. The dimpled damsels told him: "that it was an image, representing Love, to whom they had just sacrificed." "An image," cried Mahal, "an image?"—"Yes, an image of white stone: only touch it." Some of the females jocosely led him to the statue. He touched it, and asked with increased surprise, "Stone? What stone? How did it come? Did it come like the rest of the stones? Like these trees here? Is it produced by the earth, or did it drop from the clouds?"—

They

They answered him: "It is formed by the hands of man, shaped from rough dead stone, and lives only in the expression, in the spirit of the expression which the genius of the artist breathed into it by the creation of his hands. Behold here is the young man that created it!" This discovery increased Mahal's confusion. He would alternately look upon the image, and the young man, examine and feel the latter's hands, and say in his heart: "Is this wonderful being the work of these hands? Then the inhabitants of the vallies may justly call themselves gods, because they create from dead stone creatures who resemble them, and appear stouter and taller than themselves! It is certainly the work of the mighty of heaven; who once cohabited with their mothers, and taught them magic.—And what," exclaimed

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claimed he, "does this figure represent?"—Love.—"What is Love?"

The youths looked at the girls, and the girls at the youths. One of the young men accosted Mahal, and said: "Follow us to our dwellings, and thou shalt see and know what love is. It is the sixth sense, which we have created ourselves, and extorted by art. It is the spirit of society, the relish of life, the union of hearts to enjoyment, by a play of the understanding which distinguishes us from the brute animals and thy brothers on the old mountain. It is the mother of sweet blifs and sweet pain."

They now made their disciple walk in the middle of them, and retired with shouts and wanton sports to the adjacent dwellings. The old ones gave him a hearty reception, and he found in all he saw and heard, so much
matter

matter for surprise and admiration, that he remained like a lifeless machine among his hosts. Blooming virgins conducted him to the bath, washed, rubbed and anointed him, perfumed his beard, and made him put on a fine and light garment. Mahal now said in his heart :

“ Lord ! do these fair, good and friendly creatures deserve thy wrath, and the destruction with which thou hast threatened them ? See, how they take pains to please me and do me good, yet I have done nothing to merit such kindness ! How fair are their women ! how soft and white their hands ! how mild and inviting their looks ! Certainly they cannot but be good.”

With this conviction Mahal entered the hall, where a large banquet was prepared. The fumes of the viands
entered

entered his nostrils, and tickled his palate. His deportment and questions at table entertained all the guests, and every thing he tasted, observed and felt, strengthened him in the belief that God was bounteous to these brisk, gay and good creatures. As he went to bed, he was informed, that the next morning a feast would be celebrated in the wood, as the sublime and mighty sultan of the city of Enoch was going to take another wife. Songs and music awoke him from his slumber, which was taken up with a series of pleasant and wonderful appearances and images. The juvenile groups repaired to the shades of the wood, ate and drank, and gave a loose to their joy. Soon the old associated and joined with the young, and these again with the old, in postures and attitudes over which I will draw a veil,

since

since I am now to speak to your Highness's reason, but not to stimulate your senses.

The Caliph. Then thy tales will be so much the worse.

Ben Hafi. The sun had not yet sunk beneath the western horizon, when all this gaiety was at an end. The wild clamours of discord resounded from a neighbouring arbour; jealousy had divided two rivals. Mahal ran to witness the novelty of the scene; he heard the youths quarrel about a virgin, and make use of such words as formed a strange contrast with those he had hitherto heard. The stronger of the two had closely grasped the virgin, and wanted to carry her into the thicket; but the weaker, following him, from behind ran his sword through his body. The wounded youth fell: the virgin fled, and told

those who approached of the foul deed. Every body fled, and Mahal alone remained about the wounded youth, quite lost in meditation. He could not reconcile the pleasures of the day and the gentleness of those beings with the scene before him. At the sight of the blood, and the groans of the dying youth, he deeply remembered the words of the Lord: "The earth is horrid to me; it is covered with blood!" With pity he gazed at the expiring victim, drew the sword out of the wound, and beheld with awful and terrific emotion the instrument of murder. The youth soon gave up the ghost; and Mahal shivered with fear, on seeing the distortion of his features and the deadly paleness that covered his face.

Meanwhile a host of armed men rushed upon Mahal, wrung the blood-stained

stained sword out of his hands, bound and carried him into the city. He was there shut up in a dark dungeon, and left all night to his own meditations.

Ben Hafi now rolled up his manuscript, and rose to withdraw.

The Caliph. I could lay a wager, they have taken up poor Mahal as the murderer of the young man ; and in this case he may get but badly off, being both a stranger and such a blockhead.

THIRD EVENING.

BEN HAFI was punctual to the minute, and thus continued his narrative.

Last night, Lord of Believers, we left Mahal in prison. The place was too dark, the transition too sudden, the motive too tragical, and the conduct of the armed men too harsh, not to have filled his heart with the most unpleasant sensations. The inhabitants of the vallies now appeared to him in a somewhat different light, and he felt a presentiment that God could not be quite mistaken with regard to them.

Justice being very strictly, rigidly and speedily administered at Enoch, he was brought before his judges at day-break ; a custom which the flood seems to have washed away with many others.

The Caliph. Such a custom certainly prepossesses one in favour of the sovereign of the country where it is established ; for where judges rise thus early to do their duty, the monarch must be very vigilant.

Ben Hafi. Some men clad in scarlet entered Mahal's prison, wrapped him up in a black garment, threw a black veil over his head, which hung down his shoulders in the form of a sack, and then walked with him quite slowly, and howling in a deep tone, through the streets. In a hall, the veil was taken from his face. Here he saw twelve black figures, wrapt up in the

same manner as he had been a moment before, form a circle around him. Behind each of the muffled men, was one dressed in white, with a black staff in his hand. One of the persons clad in scarlet gave three loud beats upon a kettledrum that stood in the middle of the circle. At the third beat, each of the whites touched with his staff the man in black sitting before him, and at that same moment the veils dropped down. The twelve unveiled men all stared at Mahal, without seeming to take any notice of each other ; and from the size and carbuncles of their faces, it appeared that they did not fare meanly. A man in scarlet beat again the kettledrum, the whites touched the judges with their staffs, and the judges again veiled their countenances. Then one of the men in scarlet walked up to Mahal, and presented

presented to him the indictment or act of accusation. Mahal held the act a long while in his hand, and looked at its singular signs and characters. The same man then presented a pen to him, but Mahal refused taking it. The man in scarlet, impatient at this refusal, threatened Mahal, who cried out at last: "Men of Enoch! I come from the mountain; I know not what you want, nor do I understand the meaning of these signs."

While Mahal's voice was resounding, the men dressed in white gave nine very violent knocks upon the heads of the judges in black, who ran off in confusion. The men in scarlet laid hold of Mahal very angrily, and dragged him along.

The Caliph. But why? What had the poor fool done?

Ben Hafi. The forms had been vio-

lated, and this was a great offence to the court of judges. The latter having however collected in an adjoining room, were of opinion, that the accused ought to be instructed in the use of letters and reading, and that his trial be put off till such time as he should be sufficiently proficient in his learning to make out the act of accusation, and deliver in his defence.

One of the schoolmasters of Enoch appeared therefore before Mahal, and told him the reason of his coming. Mahal, remembering the command of the Lord to set down in signs or letters all he should hear, see and think, carefully attended to the instructions he received of the man versed in letters. Mahal's childish ignorance giving on all occasions opportunity to his teacher to display his learning, there soon began to subsist between them the
pleasant

pleasant and peaceable relation which we so often witness between the learned and the ignorant. Mahal was never tired of asking questions, nor his teacher of answering him; and each answer was the subject of astonishment, of wonder, and new questions. Amongst other things, Mahal asked him what those muffled men in black were for; which question being answered and set down in too trivial a manner in the manuscript, so as to adapt it to the then unenlightened head of our traveller, I shall relate its substance in a manner more worthy of your Highness's bright understanding.

Among all the corruptions, Lord of Believers, that undermine and sap the foundation of a state, there is none more dangerous or more ruinous, than the corruptibility of magistrates
and

and judges. It immediately spreads around like the plague, and communicates itself to all that approach the infected. If, for instance, our Grand Vizier were infected with that horrid crime, you may safely infer, that it will extend to the Cadi of the smallest village in your empire. As soon as the people see that law and justice are bought at market, every one will strive to devise plans to bring the corruptible magistrate over to his interest, to the detriment of his injured neighbours. Then vanishes all honour, all patriotism, all sentiment of right, and even all compassion. Avarice, covetousness, and vile interest then dissolve all the bands of humanity, extinguish both in the injurer and the injured all confidence in the ruler: and universal degeneracy, and the miseries it produces, must finally shake and
subvert

'subvert the throne, were it even hewn out of rocks.

Such was the state of the empire of Enoch, continued Mahal's preceptor, under the ancestor of our sublime and most gracious sovereign. He saw the havoc, with pain and indignation, and tried every means to stem its progress. He punished; he rewarded: yet all was in vain; the fatal poison had penetrated too deep. He enacted the wisest laws; they cut a splendid figure in the code of the empire; every body praised them; but they were only laws in the book. Alas! the monarch who wants to benefit a corrupted nation, imposes a hard task upon himself. As quickly as one villain can corrupt a people, so slowly can many good men mend them again; and that many good men should succeed one another on the throne, is a case on which

which history has hitherto been silent. The ancestor of our sublime monarch at last meditated a new plan ; being resolved, at once, and cost what it would, to pull up the evil by the root. He ordered the most ingenious persons in his dominions to be brought before him.

The Caliph. But who were those that chose and brought them ?

Ben Hafi. The record does not tell. Probably they were the Viziers and the chief Cadis.

The Caliph. I have no objection to it ; still I should have liked it better, had they chosen common citizens, and not looked out for the most learned, but the most just.

Ben Hafi. The persons selected were all learned young men, whom the Sultan ordered to be fully instructed in the laws ; and after they had undergone

gone the most minute examination, he gave orders to bore through in one day the drum of their ears, that they might be deaf, and to cut off as much of their tongue as should make them completely dumb. He then gave orders to feed and keep them in the most sumptuous manner, and the people were obliged to pay them the highest respect wherever they showed themselves. But when Enoch found that the deaf and dumb took the same course as those who heard and spoke, he invented the usages which I have just described.

They must try the offenders wrapt up in veils, they are only allowed to see their faces a single moment, and the rest of the proceedings between the accused party and his judges is transacted in writing. The accused, the witnesses, and the official defenders

might

might then be considered as dumb as the judges were deaf; and being muffled up and veiled, their eyes, mien and gestures could not corrupt or preoccupy the judges. While the accused was writing his defence on large and soft leaves, all the judges sat wrapt up; and when he had completed it, he was himself wrapt up again, and the verdict handed by each judge unveiled to the man dressed in white behind him, who delivered it to the president, who pronounced sentence by a majority of suffrages, which was previously announced by the usual written signs to the judges. The ancestor of our great ruler, added the teacher of Mahal, trusted so very little to the judges thus maimed, that he thought it prudent and necessary to keep them secluded from all other men. Every one of them with his wife had a commodious

modious and distinct dwelling assigned him, where he could gratify, without the smallest hindrance, the enjoyment of his remaining senses. Government made it its business to supply him with every thing that a man of three senses could possibly desire. But in a short time, all things went on in the old train; for as the wives of the judges could both hear and see, and speak to their deaf husbands by gesture, the accused soon found a more direct and a safer way to the hearts of the latter. To reform this abuse, Sultan Enoch made them undergo a certain operation, which he thought an infallible remedy against all farther corruption.

The Caliph. What could that remedy be? If you will discover it to me, and it answers, I will make you the richest man in Bagdad.

Ben.

Ben Hafi. He had them all castrated.

Here the Grand Vizier, the Cadis, and the whole court cried, "What! Castrated?" They looked at the old deaf eunuch, and the eunuch looked at them.

Ben Hafi. Yes, castrated! But those who had the operation performed upon them, were rewarded by the appointment to the first offices of state; and what your Highness scarcely will believe, though the record plainly expresses it, is, that every family in Enoch made it their ambition most zealously to contend for that honour, and the successful candidates studied the law with unremitting diligence. The instructions of his teacher afforded Mahal ample scope for reflection. He owns himself, that without such assistance he should never have been able

able to comprehend the ceremony through which he went with the men in black, in white, and in scarlet. He now fancied, that that court would soon put an end to his travels ; but he was happily disappointed. The man of letters had so often named the Sultan, as to excite Mahal's curiosity. He gave the most sublime, brilliant, and pathetic description to the latter, of the person, qualities, and origin of his monarch. " The Sultans of Enoch," said he, " are descended in a direct line from Naamah, the beautiful offspring of our grandfire Cain. The charms of this Naamah were so powerful, as to fill the hearts of the mighty spirits Aza and Azael with flames of terrestrial love. Of them she conceived the puissant Gedim. Aza endowed his son with terrible power, and Azael gifted him with a

penetrating genius, an enterprising mind, and dangerous artifice. But Gedim's fathers being spirits, and not men, nor feeling by men's senses, they forgot to give to their son, what is most necessary and valuable among men, sympathy and compassion. But this very defect made Gedim a great monarch, as he would not suffer any private use of mean, secondary considerations to stop him in his plans, enterprises, and exploits. Gedim displayed his wonderful gifts just at his heart's desire, became formidable to all, and delighted solely in his fame of terrific glory. He subdued his neighbours, and, having conquered all he could by force and terror, kept his conquests together by his wisdom and his sword; instructed his subjects in the arts, and executed by them works which we still survey with amazement.

So

So powerfully did he reign over the hearts of the men of his time, that the fear of him was propagated from generation to generation; and we still tremble at him before his descendant.

“ Fortunately, however, did the influence of the mighty spirits diminish a little in the sultans of each following generation: they are now much gentler; and all that they preserve of the gifts of Gedin, is the consciousness of their sublime origin, the contempt of those who spring from common or ignoble parents, and certain secrets, which the spirits taught Naamah, who communicated them to Gedin, from whom they were transmitted from father to son, in due hereditary succession.

“ This,” concluded the preceptor, “ is a most fortunate circumstance for

monarchs, since they can make use of secrets, where the light of plain truth might injure their interest. Such, Mahal, is the origin and pedigree of our exalted sovereign; we wish that he may soon present us with an heir of his power, lest his heaven-born race should become extinct, and we poor Enochers be obliged to govern ourselves by our foolish reason. We have long offered prayers and supplications to the formidable Gedim to grant us our wishes: at length he seems to have heard us, for the mighty spirits Aza and Azael have lately sent down a virgin from the mountain. She is descended from the son of God Seth, and the Sultan has accepted her as his favourite Sultaneßs."

The Caliph. Is not this Sultaneßs the ravished daughter of your sheepish Mahal?

Ben

Ben Hafi. Your Highness guesses right. Mahal himself, silly as he appears, suspected that it must be his own daughter : and having convinced himself of the truth of his supposition, by several particulars which he asked his tutor, he joyfully exclaimed : “ Ah, Milka, my daughter ! ”—His preceptor desired him to explain ; and having heard what he had to relate, he fell down in humble prostration at his pupil’s feet, saying : “ Lord ! remember me in thy greatness ! ” He then left Mahal abruptly, who, intoxicated with the thought of his daughter’s being the wife of one of the mighty giants of the earth, whom he so much dreaded, almost forgot that this Sultan had forsaken the True God.

The Caliph now beckoned Ben Hafi to retire for the night.

FOURTH EVENING.

Ben Hafi. MAHAL's teacher, great Caliph, went and blockaded the vestibule of the chief of his tribe, till he obtained an audience. It was to him he related his adventure and all its particulars. The chief, anticipating the advantages that this accident would procure him in the favour of the Sultaneſs, to whom he had free access at every hour of the day, being charged with curing her of the ignorance ſhe had brought with her from the old mountain, ran himſelf almoſt out of breath in bringing this gladſome

news to the palace. The Sultaneſs, with due reverence, communicated the whole affair to her ſublime ſpouſe, who graciously condeſcended to order one of his meſſengers to fetch his father-in-law with ſuitable reſpect.

Mahal was now ſplendidly clothed, taken from the gaol, which had hitherto been his ſchool, and with every ſign of veneration, though againſt his will, and regardless of his prayers, mounted on the back of a ſtately horſe richly caparifoned, and led, according to cuſtom, by ſeveral ſlaves or ſervants. Some of the criers and heralds of the court opened the proceſſion, exclaiming with an audible voice: “Hail Mahal! Hail deſcendant of Seth! The wiſe man of the mountain! The revered father of our fair Sultaneſs!” The people bent their bodies low to the ground on his

G 4 approach ;

approach; and Mahal himself confesses, that great as his fear was on the back of the prancing animal, he soon forgot it at the spectacle of so much submission.

The Caliph. I give him credit for that. Stupid as he was, he could not help becoming sensible of his having turned a quite different man, because a sultan honoured him.

Ben Hafi. We will now see how all this pomp agrees with him.—Milka, the Sultaneſs, received him in the midst of her court, dazzling in gold, silver, and diamonds. Mahal, either overpowered by her splendid appearance, or chilled by her haughty reserve, durst not accost her, press her to his palpitating heart, and shed tears of joy, as he could wish to have done. The Sultaneſs, encircled by her bright court, asked him, in a cold
and

and formal manner, how he did ; and added with an air of indifference, that she was glad to see him a visitor at Enoch. He was now graciously dismissed from her presence, and his attendants amused him with their stiff and rampant homage till evening came, when a chamberlain introduced him to the Sultaneſs's inner room, where ſhe firſt embraced him, and asked him reſpecting every thing that had happened. His heart now grew warm again ; he gave her a circumſtantial account of all that had befallen him, not forgetting to touch upon his high miſſion, which, however, did not ſeem to attract the notice of the Sultaneſs. He finally entreated her with heartfelt concern, to tell him the cauſe of the cold reception ſhe had given him in the morning. “ Such,” replied ſhe, “ is the will of the mighty

mighty Sultan, my spouse. He told me, that this conduct was one of the many secrets which Gedim had obtained by his mother from Aza and Azael, to govern the human race. I found it a little hard at first; but the Sultan keeping me to it, and myself being more and more pleased with the awful and lowly homage of those who surround me, I submit to this constraint, and feel my compensation in that of the people."

The Caliph. I like this Sultaness for her tractability. Indeed, when I see my courtiers before me as humble as dancing dogs, and as pliable as the reed of the lake, I forget all the constraint which my high dignity makes me suffer. A smile, a frown, a wink, makes them do whatever I please. And this is a comfort that will make one bear something too. How they
can

can bear it, or comfort themselves, I do not know.

Ben Hafi. The game which your Highness plays with them, they repeat again with their subordinate dependants.

The Caliph. And I suppose my dependants' dependants carry on the same with other dependants, and these with fresh dependants down to the lowest dependant. This is certainly one of the secrets to keep mankind in order; and, thanks to the Prophet, I have discovered it.

Ben Hafi. Mahal was less fortunate; he long carped at the problem, and only found it more and more intricate.

The Caliph. His daughter, I dare say, will soon teach it him.

Ben Hafi. This we shall see. Before they parted that evening, Milka said: "Father, the short time I have sojourned

sojourned in this wonderful city, among these wonderful people, I have seen and experienced things which nobody ever dreams of on our dull mountain. The Enochers are not that bad race whom the austere Noah described to us. Only be tractable, and do as I have done, and you will find every one ready to teach you.

The next morning Mahal's attendants dressed him in a still richer habit, girded a sword about his loins, and introduced him to the golden hall of Sultan Pooh. Being informed that he would soon be blest by the presence of this mighty ruler, Mahal's spirits were all alive, and his blood circulated the quicker at the idea of beholding in a few moments the powerful monarch, the mighty man, the giant, and the sublime descendant of the sons of God.

This

This Sultan Pooh, your Highness will observe, to whom by a long succession very little had been left of the transcendent powers and endowments with which the spirits or angels had gifted his grandfire, endeavoured at least to supply those defects by the most scrupulous observance of the ceremonies and formalities introduced by his predecessors.

The Caliph. Well, he did as much as he could, and he that does that does his duty. The ox draws the plough, the horse carries the warrior, the camel bears the load.

Ben Hafi. And the monkey makes grimaces.

The Caliph. And makes even the angry laugh—

Ben Hafi. And the wise man think the more.

The

The Caliph. And he is a mirror to the fool.

Ben Hafi. In which he seldom sees his own image. But let us return to Sultan Pooh.—He subjected himself and his courtiers to the most rigid forms of outward respect (because that which is inward no Sultan on earth can command, unless he deserve it)—his household was so regularly taught, that every thing moved as punctually as clock work ; and, as long as nothing obstructed the motion of the wheels, he could very well dispense with the spirit of his ancestors. I can assure you, Lord of Believers, that before the Flood (since the Flood the case is quite altered), many a silly fool thus maintained himself with honour on his throne ; and it certainly would be the most commodious form of government,

ment, if the turbulent and seditious, unforeseen circumstances, little casualties and accidents, did not at times destroy the smooth, easy, and regular order of such governments, and give birth to great and eventful revolutions. Nations would doubtless live happier under such easy and quiet rulers, than under those obstinate, ambitious minds whom a thirst for conquest consumes, who fatten the earth with human gore, destroy cities without building new ones, waste the resources of the people in luxury, dissipation and crime, bid defiance to the most salutary laws held sacred by their ancestors, and hover, like a destructive comet, for a short time, in the face of a ruined people, till death plunges them into that obscurity from which it were better they never had risen. Sultan Pooh, please your
Highness,

Highness, was none of those warring rulers.

The Caliph. I shall not like him the worse for it. I thank God, that I sit in peace on the throne of the Caliphate; but I do not forget that it first was gained by the sword. He who wants to feel the keen edge of mine, needs but attack my prerogative.

Ben Hafi. Sit always in peace on your throne; for, believe me, Lord of Believers, it is a much easier seat than that surrounded by the manes of the slain victims of war. With this sincere wish, I follow the thread of my tale.

The glittering brightness of the hall where Mahal now was; the magnificent throne, supported by lions, and ornamented at its top with a monstrous bird, wearing a human face,

face, having long and wide spreading wings, the body of a goat, and the claws of a tiger; the rich dresses of the courtiers; the solemn stilness, and the awfully respectful deportment of all present, served to impress him more and more with the conviction, that a being of a superior nature, of a particular and formidable kind, would soon make his entry.

A large gate flew open with a loud creak, and at the same moment Mahal was violently thrown down, with his front on the marble pavement; and those that kept him under whispered into his ear: "For your life, stir if you dare!" Mahal remained in this posture till the Sultan had given audience to his ministers and courtiers, by surveying the whole circle with cold and earnest looks. Then the master of the ceremonies presented to

the sublime Pooh the prostrate stranger. The Sultan, with wonted majesty, approached Mahal, and, supported by the two first servants of the state, put his foot on the back of his head, and stamped on it with such might, that the raw and ignorant man of the mountain thought the foot of some huge giant was going to dash out his brains. He shrieked, moaned, and struggled with those that held him, like a wild boar against the fangs of the hounds.

Sultan Pooh then seated himself on his throne; and soon after a piece of rich tapestry rolled down, and made him invisible to the eyes of every beholder. Mahal was now raised from the floor; and his nose and face being all over blood, the courtiers approached him with great reverence, to congratulate him upon the happiness

ness he had experienced. Your penetrating genius, Successor of the Prophet, will easily make you conceive, that the degrees of the Sultan's favour were measured by the effects of the force with which his Highness trod upon the head of the person presented, and that a violent tread or kick of the Sultanic foot was as much desired by the courtiers of Enoch, as the smiles of favour elsewhere.

The Caliph. A very singular ceremony! But there is a regular, systematic order in the proceeding, which makes it respectable. Nevertheless, it was very wrong for the master of the ceremonies not to have instructed the raw mountaineer in the etiquette of the court. No officer of my household durst make such a blunder, and hope for pardon.

Ben Hafi. But how could the

courtiers of Enoch's Sultan suppose, that there was a man on earth so barbarously ignorant, as not to know the etiquette of the most ancient court in the world ?

The Caliph. Courtiers, to be sure, are never at a loss for apologies, which is a true mark of their high breeding.

Ben Hafi. The courtiers of Enoch, constrained by Mahal's rude and savage deportment, then whispered into his ear the real meaning of what had been done, stopped the blood which gushed out of his nose with an aromatic water used for that purpose, and put him before the concealed throne. The curtain being quickly drawn up, Mahal saw on a sudden the Majesty of Enoch in all his lustre before him ; and was still more surprised at this sight than at the violent kicks he had received. Instead of a
huge

huge giant, a formidable son of God, and a mighty man, he saw a puny, peevish, pale form of a being, about five feet high, and loaded with jewels and other ornaments. Thus your Highness sees that the influence of the powerful celestial spirits was not very perceptible, at least in the body of this successor of Gedim.

Mahal's confusion, his silly amazement, and his gaping look, were construed very much in his favour. Sultan Pooh attributed the impression he had made on his father-in-law to his majestic appearance, to his elevated form, and to his large, glassy, and staring eyes, the sole hereditary traces left to him of the grandeur of his ancestor. Pooh, enraptured with the thought of his self-importance, even forgot the prescribed rules, and smiled a little ; but the Sultan soon recollect-

ing his dignity, stared wildly before him. Thus ended an hour so great and momentous to Mahal. Amidst an incessant buzzing of compliments and congratulations, the courtly swarm conducted him to his new apartments in the palace, where he immediately threw himself down in very bad humour upon a soft couch. He was more vexed at his disappointment in not finding something gigantic, grand, and celestial in the person of the monarch of Enoch, than at the rough thumps which his aquiline nose and his forehead had received. "What!" said he to himself, "that puny, fullen bit of a man, that trampled upon the head of me, who am a descendant of Seth! that puppet of a creature, decked out with toys, about whom every body stands trembling! that dwarfish and emaciated wight rules
over

over all the inhabitants of this mighty realm ! What ! the shivering Pooh operates all I see, hear, or perceive ! and this so powerfully, that his name resounds far and near, like the dread thunder of the Almighty ! How does he contrive all this ? What can be the magic by which he effects such wonders ? Can it be because he is a descendant of the spirits ? As far as I can see, there is nothing of the kind in him : compared with me, and most of those who stand trembling about him, he is but a shrivelled shadow. However, I cannot as yet discover, why the Lord should be so embittered against the people of Enoch ; for they all appear to be good-natured ; and though the sorry Sultan has trod me under foot, yet they assure me of his favour and benevolence. How can such little, weak

creatures be so wicked as to provoke the wrath of the Great God himself? How can they build these cities, these bridges, these towers? How can they tame the horse, and make the waters obey their strokes? How can that weak, little man fetter the will of all the stronger? How can they suffer him to dash their heads on the ground, for the sake of a smile? He is no giant, I see; and as he is no giant, he surely is a forcerer: his grandam Naamah had, no doubt, learned magic of the sons of God, taught it her son Gedim, and thus transmitted it as a patrimony to this little Pooh!"

After this soliloquy Mahal remembered his tutor, and requested he might be sent for with all possible expedition. When the man versed in letters entered the room, and saw the swelling

swelling of his pupil's nose, he complimented him on his good fortune, and commended himself to his favour. Having now given an account of the manner in which he caused the Sultaneſs to be informed of her father's arrival, he gave him a ſlight hint of the recompenſe he expected for his trouble. Mahal, ſtill abſorbed in thought, paid no attention to his maſter's intimation, and contented himſelf with telling him of his diſappointment in finding the Sultan a quite different being from what he expected.

His inſtructor now informed him, that he had really ſeen the greateſt prodigy where he believed to have ſeen none at all. He then expatiated with energy on the ſecret virtues of the government, which concentrated entirely in the Sultan's perſon. " It is

my opinion," resumed Mahal, " that if I had seen the greatest prodigy, as you suppose, I should have convinced myself, that Pooh is a descendant of the spirits, or sons of God. But forthwith I shall believe no such thing; and as to the secret virtues of your government, I shall take pains to trace them out."

The teacher turned quite pale with affright at this bold assertion; and having looked around, to see if any one had overheard their conversation, he was glad to find nobody present, broke off the discourse with his disciple, and, actuated by the scruples of his tender conscience, hastened to impart to the chief of his tribe every word Mahal had spoken. The chief advised his informant to be silent on the subject, and recorded the denunciation in the book of memory.

Mahal became afterwards as intimate with his son-in-law as his dignity of Sultan would admit; and this condescending intercourse served only to make him the more dubious about the sublime magic endowments which he had been taught were inherent in his sacred person.

The Caliph. Very natural your churl should doubt such things: had he been a sensible man, he would immediately have discovered, that it is not a mass of flesh and bones, but the spirit and the understanding that enable sovereigns to govern men.

Ben Hafi. But suppose he could not discern that spirit and understanding in Pooh, what was the simple mountaineer to think?

The Caliph. Think!—What business has a simpleton to think?

Ben Hafi. There is no other argument

ment to be opposed to your Highness's decision, than that poor Mahal was obliged to think, and that his thoughts were out of the jurisdiction of the magician of Enoch. The manuscript declares: "He still could not conceive, how the courtiers of Enoch could discover so much in their Sultan, in whom he discovered so little;" and he continued meditating upon the dark secrets which produced all the prodigies he saw. The Sultan bore with him, and outwardly esteemed him as his wife's father; and the Sultaneſs was ſtill gracious to him on public occasions, and ſhewed herſelf friendly in private.

Mahal, tired of the buſtle and pageantry of the court, now went forth into the populous city, accompanied by a few attendants. And if the Lord of Believers command it, I will interpret

pret some of his observations to-morrow night.

The Caliph. So you may ;—but I suppose they will be very indifferent and dull.

FIFTH EVENING.

Pen Hafi. **THUS** speaks Mahal in the record: Enoch is the city where men have fixed the scene of their turbulence. A river traverses it which they call the Arrow, and over it they have raised an arch of stones, which is reported to be the work of Gedim; and, to judge from its loftiness, it is more the production of mighty spirits than of weak men. But weak as they are, they can nevertheless do great things, if they unite together in an undertaking. Their caves, which they denominate houses, are very neatly furnished, decorated, and abounding

ing in all that is convenient. Each cave has its door, that may be locked, to prevent any body's seeing what goes forward in it. If one goes to another, he marks his coming by a loud knock at the door, for fear of surprizing the master of the house in some bad deed.

I am afraid to cross the multitudes that throng the streets; and think always they may begin some bad quarrel among themselves, as I have remarked at my son-in-law's, that they cruelly hate one another, and that the Sultan himself durst not show his pale, sullen and peevish face every where.

There is a great number of persons at Enoch, whose hands, with the aid of various tools, form all kinds of things for use and pleasure, from wood, stone, metal, and threads. I
saw

saw myself a young man that formed a figure from stone, and now I laugh at my fear of the stony image they call Love. I have certainly seen the same image at Enoch, but no such interpretation has been given me of it as that I received from the inhabitants of the fields. Singular, yes very singular it appears that they who work most are the poorest, and inhabit the most miserable and the dirtiest holes. Those in the fields, I hear, labour much harder, and are still poorer; and those who treated me so well on quitting the mountains are not, I am told, country people, but citizens who only went out to amuse themselves, and see the former toil. On the other hand, there are many persons in this city, and especially at court, that are very rich, have plenty of every thing, and do no work at all. They call

call these the better-born; but how they live I can't conceive, particularly as they want so many things; nor have I any idea how they manage it to be begotten and born better than the rest. Others go by the title of the Sultan's officers of state, most of whom are of the better-born class, and doubly well off. Others work with their wit and tongue for those who have no wit, nor know how to use their tongue; and they likewise stand very well. Others buy of the workmen and labourers in town and country all their produce at a very low price, and then sell it very high. He is the richest man who purchases cheapest and sells dearest. I wonder that they make the poor give a very high price for all they buy, and that the great and the chiefs get every thing much cheaper, and frequently

don't even pay for what they have. This perhaps makes them sell every thing so very dear to the poor : and the poor are, in fact, too timid in presence of the rich ; and if rich men wrong them, the poor hardly dare mention it.

Now I perceive why the better-born are so rich and do nothing : the poor work for them, and often one wealthy man keeps many hundreds, who work for him, and whom he does not call his supporters, but his inferiors. Things always go by a different name here from what they actually are.

The Sultan and my daughter spend and waste as much as must require some thousands of hands to work for them. It is nothing to me ; but what provokes me, is, that the rich and idle despise, and frequently even ill-treat, those who work for them.

Those labourers and workmen must be very good-natured indeed; else how could they put up with their miserable pittance, and not wrest from others that plenty which they first gave them? All those to whom I have hitherto talked on this subject, tell me, that such was the will of the mighty Gedim, and that Sultan Pooh enforces the hard mandate by his judges and the swords of his soldiers. It is very well that the multitude are afraid of those maimed judges and those armed soldiers; else I should not like to be one of the better-born and rich.

The artists who create images from stones, and those who imitate men, animals and trees with various colours, besides the men versed in letters, were quite satisfied with me. I loudly admired them, and seemed surprised

at all they said. My companions told the puny Sultan of it, who reprehended me bitterly; alleging, that my plainness disgraces him, that no great man ought to admire any thing, and much less to manifest his sentiments to his inferiors, should even some object extort his inward admiration. He probably is affronted, because I don't praise such figures as resemble him; and whenever he does not show his peevish and affected face to the court, he shuts himself up, to form images much stiffer and punier than himself. I cannot praise these like his courtiers, nor can I praise any thing he says or performs. Yet after all he is not a bad man, and all the inhabitants of the city are good, amicable, and respectful to me. I am quite embarrassed to guess what makes the Lord so irritated against them.

them. Would it not be a pity to destroy people who execute such great things, who animate dead stones, give different forms to metals, nay make them even a fluid fire, and paint their thoughts in such a manner as to make two persons converse together, be they ever so distant from each other, nay even cause the dead to speak to those that still are living? They live merry, even the workmen at certain times. They deny themselves no kind of enjoyment, and go in pursuit of every pleasure. Their favourite topics are feasting, carousing, dress and women. The noble-born like best to talk of the favour of my son-in-law. All this does not surprise me, because whatever they eat or drink is nice and palatable. Their women please by their affability and beauty, and are very glad to see one

take pains to please them ; and in this case they do all they can to give one delight. That the great should, be very solicitous of the Sultan's favour is very natural, because through it they get plenty of all they wish for from the rest of the people, and need not work for it. They do both good and bad with such an air of carelessness, as if they could not act otherwise. If I observe them closely, it seems to me as if they had no other rule of conduct, and as if the Lord was angry with them for things they cannot alter. Since he made them so, he surely must know best. My daughter, who walked the path of righteousness on the mountain, is become quite like them, and I hardly think her the same being. The conduct of the townspeople must indeed be very infectious ; and their crimes, which have provoked

voked God's displeasure, must be very natural to men. I am very sorry for it, especially since the source of their vices is attributed by the Lord and my brother-in-law Noah to their own corrupted hearts. I hope I shall soon discover how it really is.

On the market-place stands the great monument of Cain, the founder of Enoch. They call the spot holy, but I can't tell why. They dare neither venture to touch the stone, nor approach it. In this place, say the Enochers, Lamech shot Cain, who stood behind a bush, through the heart, with an arrow which he had let fly at a roe-buck. I thought in myself, much better had it been, if the Lord's arrow had struck Cain before he descended into the vallies to lay the foundation of this city. It would not then be full

of horrors, as the Lord saith, and ripening unto destruction.

Here also stands in the same square the huge and frightful image of Gedim. His name is oftener uttered than the Lord's; whom these people seem to have quite forgotten for the sake of the former. I mentioned something about this to Sultan Pooh, who asked me, "if I was displeased at the people's honouring his great ancestor, and him in Gedim?"

About the image of the formidable Gedim there are many other images of the Sultans his successors, all very large, but still progressively smaller than Gedim. My puny son-in-law's figure is also among them, and is the hugest statue after that of Gedim. The Sultans must be very fond indeed of being formed large in their images, and they cannot be great friends to truth.

truth. In these figures they look exactly such as I fancied them on the mountain. In fact, these men magnify all they do, form, or express; may be it happens, because they feel themselves so little, and wish to appear greater and better than they are! But nothing astonishes me more in those semblances of the Sultans, than that each of them should have some ferocious animal or bird of prey for his companion. My little son-in-law has a huge lion at his feet, that furiously looks about, threatening to devour. The animal's fangs are very beautifully imitated. I will ask him about this matter; for, as much as I know of him, I am sure he would almost die with fear at the very sight of a much smaller lion alive.

I have dismissed my chattering teacher because I could not bear him
on

on account of his constant talking about the sublime qualities of Sultan Pooh. For my part, I have not yet found any thing pleasant or great in him; and if he be not a magician, sure the fellows are all mad thus to quake and tremble at him.

I have at last found a man, who promises to solve me the problem; his name his Ram. My son-in-law cannot bear him, I hear; and he dares not appear with the rest of the better-born to gape at him at court. He surely must think as I do, because he laughs at his anger. This Ram has taught me certain words, and shewn me how to apply them; so that I can now account for many things that happen among men, which I could not explain or conceive before. These words are, "Want, advantage, enjoyment, deception, hypocrisy, folly, pride,

pride, hope and fear." The sense of these words, which he illustrates to me by different instances, makes me perceive the motives of many things that happen. In Ram's opinion, men are merely held together here by the virtue of those words, which are the source of good and evil, and of all that men do. I asked him, whence those words came, and who had invented them? He answered: "Our instincts, our heart." I know in myself the instinct to hunger, to thirst, to woman, and, for some time past, the instinct or wish to know every thing the inhabitants of the cities know. I can resist none of those instincts, nor could I give myself one of them. Suppose now, the inhabitants of the vallies could not master any of those instincts which Ram ascribes to them? Suppose they felt them so irresistible

resistible as not to be able to live in
 their cities together without gratifying
 them? Ram has likewise told me,
 that as long as our forefathers lived in
 innocence upon the mountain, they
 knew nothing of all this, nor would
 they suffer any peevish ruler or sultan
 to ride on their backs. You speak
 the truth, replied I; and I, who am
 myself come quite lately from the
 mountain, can prove it. But how
 can the present race help it that their
 ancestors left the mountain, and set-
 tled in the vallies? Ram answered
 with a derisive grin: "Go on, Mahal,
 thou art in the right way." And as
 I mentioned something to him re-
 specting the Lord's menaces, he re-
 plied with a horrid grimace: "The
 Lord might before now have put a
 stop to this farce: and if he took no
 delight in it, he would have done it
 long

long ago. But perhaps he does not mind it himself." I was shocked at these audacious words. Ram left me quite in a pet; and much in the wrong as he is, still his words press very heavy upon my mind.

The heart of my son-in-law must be as hard as the stone which forms his image. To-day I went to the market-place with those to whom he has given orders to attend me, and found a vast multitude assembled there; who no sooner perceived me, than they fled with awful respect. I now perceived Ram, my new instructor, who has taught me those significant words, standing naked before Pooh's statue, and a man scourging his trembling body with a large whip. I shuddered, and called to the tormentor to cease cutting him: but he would not obey the order; and my guide very
angrily

angrily said to me : “ Bid him double the strokes, for the miscreant has committed high treason.” On asking him what he meant by high treason, he informed me, that Ram had spoken ill of the Sultan, and openly declared, that he was not sprung from the sons of the mighty of heaven, and was no more than any other man : farther, that the story of Aza or Azael was a mere fable, invented to enslave the people of Enoch. Had I not been in fear of the whip, and otherwise grieved at the hard treatment of Ram, I would certainly have cried : “ Ram is in the right ; and I am sorry to say, Noah is in the right, and Sultan Pooh is a wicked fool. Were he of divine origin, he would not want to prove it by the whip.” However, I held my tongue, and went away in haste, as I could be of no service to my poor friend,

friend, nor bear to hear his moans. I went to the Sultan, and informed him with indignation of what I had seen. He called me an ignorant madman, turned his back to me, and murmured, "If Milka were not my spouse, I would serve thee in the same manner." I must therefore be on my guard, lest he should be as good as his word.

The Caliph. I think your Mahal really wants a good flogging, to cure him of his whims. What thousands believe, no individual should doubt or question, especially if it be one of the secrets that support the government.

Ben Hafi. You would entertain, Lord of Believers, a very wrong idea of the Sultan of Enoch's court, could you persuade yourself, that a man who thinks and speaks thus boldly would long be suffered, were he even the Sultaneſs's own father. The police of
that

that city was too vigilant for the Sultan not to have gained intelligence of Mahal's connection with the scourged traitor, and of the other expressions he had at different times taken the liberty to utter. Pooh himself had overheard several of them; and the various questions with which he daily honoured him, were of too audacious a simplicity to recover to our mountaineer that favour which in fact had never been solidly granted. The chief of the men versed in letters also thought it incumbent on himself, from a sense of his duty as well as of his zeal for the Sultan's prerogatives, to inform him of every particular which Mahal's instructor had related to him. His tribe, like that of the better-born, found their advantage and consequence inseparably connected with that of the Sultan; and on this
account

account they exhausted all their wit and eloquence to persuade the people of his being of divine origin, and the second great source of all power. On this account the following different classes of men were invented at Enoch, viz. the priests of Gedim, the castrated and maimed judges, the great of the court with all the rest of the better-born, the Sultan's officers, and lastly the men versed in letters. All others were called the populace, and existed only, as Mahal says, to work for the privileged. Though those classes hated one another secretly, yet they always concurred in every thing concerning the praise or interest of the Sultan.

Pooh began to look sour upon his father-in-law, and his courtiers followed his example. Mahal, who stood bold even before the Lord, felt him-

Self offended at the Sultan's displeasure, and freely gave vent in strong terms to his natural indignation. He also believed it was time now to prove his high mission, and to avenge God of the impostors.

One night Sultan Pooh treated him very contemptuously, and Milka, his own daughter, joined her husband in this ill usage. The next morning, being the grand feast of Gedim, Mahal intended to upbraid her for her undutiful behaviour, and to reprehend her with her levity. Hitherto his well-meaning lectures had only rendered him disagreeable to the Sultanness, which she told him too without the least reserve. Regardless of the remonstrances of an old woman, who was charged with observing the conduct of the Sultanness, he penetrated into his daughter's bedchamber, and found

found her with a young courtier in a situation in which he thought no other than his son-in-law had a right to be with her. The courtier fled through a secret door, and the indignant and ashamed father was just going to reproach his daughter with the criminality of her conduct, when the Sultaneſs with haughtineſs and ſcorn exclaimed: "Do you think we are ſtill upon the mountain among the flocks? Is my husband's court a den of beaſts for every one to force his way into it without the leaſt reſpect or caution?"

Mahal (enraged). Yes, it is a den for the moſt execrable beaſts, and thou art the impureſt among them all.

The Sultaneſs (coolly). In what reſpect? Wherefore?

Mahal. Can my daughter, the off-

spring of Seth, ask such a question? she, who but lately inhabited the mountain where God dwelleth!

The Sultaneſs. When I lived on the mountain, I lived as a mountaineer; but now that I live at court, and am a sultaneſs, I live as they do at court, and as a sultaneſs ought. Thus I am taught by every body. I follow the lessons of my teachers, and I advise you to the same: else it were better for me and you, that you return to your austere brother Noah and his flocks.

Mabal. Ought a sultaneſs to live in the state in which I found thee?

The Sultaneſs. Why not, if she has such a spouse as I have? If I wish to remain a sultaneſs, and not to be repudiated like my predecessors, I must take care, they say, to bring forth heirs to this throne. I will not bear the

the disgrace of the Sultan's former wives, whom he accused of sterility, and arraigned as criminals. I know now, that among the great qualifications which the sons of God bequeathed to his ancestor, and all of which he is said to possess, that alone is wanting which can make me a mother.

Mahal attempted to speak, but the Sultaneſs interrupted him, ſaying: “ Be not angry with me ! Is it my fault that I am Sultaneſs of Enoch ? Why have you left the mountain, where, you ſay, the Lord dwelleth ? While you was there, you quarrelled with every one, found fault with and loathed every thing. Did not you call your own brother a dull fool ? Did not you tell me a thouſand times, you was tired of living there, and wanted to deſcend into the vallies, to

see the men in the cities and their mighty rulers, and to discover all their knowledge and actions?—I answered nothing; but my heart leaped for joy, as you had kindled the desire of novelty in my bosom. You slept near me in the cavern, at the foot of the mountain; the mighty men carried me off; you never followed me, and they brought me hither. They gave me rich garments, and the high priests presented me to the Sultan, saying: ‘Wife son of the most puissant Gedim the son of Aza and Azael! behold a pure daughter of the old God, fair as thy grandam Naamah, who inflamed the mighty of heaven with terrestrial fire. Gedim sends her by us to be your spouse. Receive her from us, that you may beget a blooming progeny of sons and daughters, and that the people of

Enoch may live for ever happy under the descendants of Aza and Azael!" The Sultran has made me his spouse, and great were the rejoicings throughout the empire. Pooh, and all his court, flatter and adore me, and I am delighted with their homage. Tell them now what you have seen, none will believe you, and the mischief will retort upon yourself."

This said, the Sultaneſs withdrew to an adjoining apartment, and left Mahal by himſelf, much grieved at her ſpeech. His own conſcience was going loudly to accuſe him, when he ſuddenly felt the influence of the new ſocial refinement he had acquired. He excuſed his deſcending from the mountain, with his thirſt for knowledge and ſcience, with the expreſs command of the Lord; and loading with curſes the ſeducers of Milka,

found fresh motives for hating the Sultan, in the unfavourable description which his daughter had given him of his character. He began even not to palliate her precaution, her fear of being rejected was so very well founded.

The sound of trumpets and kettle-drums, and the shouts of the people, roused Mahal from his meditations. He repaired to the Sultan, who soon after went in state with his whole court to the market-place, to offer sacrifices before the monuments of Cain, Gedim, and the rest of the Sultans. Lambkins and steers, ornamented with ribbons of various colours, stood before the altar, and Pooh took his place facing the image of Cain, where the sacrifices were to begin. The priests drew their knives, and each of them seized an animal.

Previous to the high priest's giving the signal of slaughter, he prostrated himself with all the people before the Sultan, to whom he addressed a long speech, attempting to prove that Pooh united all the great qualities and sublime powers of his ancestors. The monarch listened to the orator with wonted gravity, while Mahal almost burst with indignation. The high priest compared the prince several times with Gedim, his grandfire, and called him the divine sprig of the sons of the heavenly spirits; and the people exclaimed: "So he is! So he is! The son of Gedim! The descendant of Aza and Azael!" Mahal would perhaps have borne this revolting scene, had not the Sultan himself provoked him to give way to his inward fury. Pooh, perceiving that his father had not fallen down with the

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the rest of the people, but remained standing like himself, his gravity changed into visible rage, and his eyes fulminated threats upon the profane. Mahal now roared out with terrible impetuosity: " Lord, why did not thy arrow kill the murderous Cain, before he could lay the foundation of this detestable idolatrous city? Thy wrath is just; extirpate them all. They worship this peevish wight here, and forget thee for the most wretched and miserable of thy creatures !"

Mahal's enthusiasm now prompted him to tell the people of Enoch of his mission, and to thunder the dread vengeance of God into their ears; when a host of armed men surrounded, seized, and carried him off.

The Sultan, enraged as he was, remembered his high dignity, and resumed his former majestic composure.

The

The victims were then slaughtered with the usual ceremony; a speech concluded the solemnity, and the prince with his courtly train returned with pomp to the palace.

The Sultaneſs, apprized of her father's mad zeal long before the monarch's return, was convinced that Mahal would never thrive at court, and dreaded even leſt his natural impetuofity ſhould make him expoſe her adulterous connection. She therefore ſent word to the chief of the learned tribe to wait on her, and imparted to him the anxiety ſhe felt at the danger in which her father had involved himſelf, and which might probably ſubject her to the ſame predicament. The chief answered: " That ſhe certainly would be in the moſt imminent danger, if ſhe attempted to excuſe or palliate the crime of her father, of whoſe heinouſ-

heinousness there was no precedent in the annals of Enoch. Her father's punishment was absolute death, but the Sultan might perhaps pardon him as one of his family ; on which account he would advise her to meet Pooh at his return, to complain heavily of her father's conduct, and to propose to have him maimed and castrated as a judge. He added, that by so doing she would appease the Sultan's wrath, incapacitate her father from all future mad tricks, and raise him to one of the first and most honourable charges in the state."

The Sultaness followed this advice, met her spouse, uttered a thousand reproaches and complaints against her foolish father, shed tears, and, by dint of sighs and caresses, prevailed upon the Sultan to adopt the proposed mode of cure, and to give orders to
put

put it in execution. It was farther resolved by the ministers, to prevent Mahal's committing other offences of that kind, to exempt him from the usual study of the law, and to instal him in his judicial office the very next day.

Milka now caused her father to be brought before her, reproached him with his frantic behaviour, informed him how she had saved him from inevitable destruction, and confidentially acquainted him with the honourable medium that had been adopted to save him. Mahal became so furious, that he was going to seize his daughter by the hair, and to chastise her with all the severity of paternal power; when her women and her instructor suddenly broke in upon him, upbraided him with his black ingratitude, and felicitated him upon the

the unmerited honour which awaited him. He now recollected the words which, in the opinion of his whipped friend Ram, kept society together, and were the source of all the good or evil men do, and prudently was silent.

The attendants of the Sultaneſs, finding him thus quiet, diſmiſſed him. But Mahal, unwilling to wait his installation, ſtole ſecretly out of the palace at the approach of night, threw himſelf into a boat on the river, and, committing himſelf to the mercy of its ſtream, left Enoch, exclaiming: “ Lord, deſtroy them all ! ”

Ben Haſi now put up the record, and took his leave of the Caliph till next evening.

SIXTH EVENING.

Ben Hafi. YOU will remember, Lord of Believers, that we left Mahal in the boat, descending with the current of the river. Much as he had experienced since he left the mountain, he was not yet sufficiently skilful to digest it properly. The talisman of the words which Ram had taught him, enabled him to unveil many a puzzling secret, and those words were constantly in his mind, or on his lips, while he was meditating in his boat on all he had heard and seen.

He was so enraged against his daughter,

daughter, and so occupied with those that had offended him, that he could not spare a minute to listen to what his heart was saying respecting himself. At last the moment came, when his conscience would remind him without flattery, as without reserve, of certain particulars of his past conduct; such, for instance, as the delight he took in the amusements of the idolatrous Enochers, his silence at the criminal intercourse between his daughter and the courtier, the reproaches she made him, &c. His mind, however, which had got somewhat enlightened, soon appeased the troublesome and severe judge. He secretly whispered to himself: "I have avenged the Lord of that miserable wight of a Sultan, and only put myself in danger, pursuant to his almighty will." He even went so far in

in his illusion as to dare imagine that the Enochers would be the best people in the world, if Pooh did not reign over them; and that God would soon be reconciled, if some sage would take upon himself to instruct them. Thus he soon absolved them from the curses which he had loaded them with on leaving Enoch, and poured them entirely upon the Sultan and his court, not excepting his own daughter. Hunger finally drew him from the depth of his reflections. He had been gliding down the stream for near fourteen hours, beheld its flowery banks planted with trees whose branches bent under the load of the finest and most savoury fruits, discovered a great number of dwellings both near and far, but saw no possibility of reaching them. Utterly ignorant of navigation, he began to fear lest the river

should carry him to the extremity of the world. This fear rendered his situation very unpleasant: he now sighed with a secret longing for his mountain, which began to lose itself in the blue sky, and repented of having so foolishly left it to go in quest of mighty giants, in whose stead he had only found a dwarfish prince, who had attempted to cripple and castrate him for a judge.

Downcast and half starved, he descried at a great distance some rocks in the river, which had drawbridges to pass to a town situate on an eminence on the banks of the river. This view quite enlivened his spirits; but the boat striking on a rock, was violently dashed to pieces; and Mahal, up to his ears in the water, fortunately laid hold of one part of the rock, trembling with agony, and

woe-

woefully crying for help. On the opposite bank of the river was a man looking at him with cold indifference, and exclaiming : " Yes, thou wilt be drowned, as sure as thou art born."

On a little islet not far from the poor sufferer was a fisherman mending his torn net ; who no sooner saw the danger Mahal was in, than he flung himself into the waves, and with great difficulty, braving the impetuosity of the stream, saved his life by dragging him on shore, where he immediately fainted. When he recovered, he found that the person who had so exultingly called out to him that he would be drowned, was his teacher Ram, who stood before him, seemingly pleased with the distress he was in. He asked Mahal the motive of so unexpected a voyage ; who answered, quite faint

and exhausted : " I perish for hunger, and have no strength to speak."

The fisherman had no sooner heard Mahal utter these words, than he ran to fetch him his own meal and some milk. The man of the mountain having thus recruited some of his lost strength and spirits, told Ram his woeful story ; but the latter soon began to laugh, and to tell him : " Had you better understood the sense of the words I taught you, you might have lived in clover at Pooh's court, and never risked the danger of being drowned here. But, desperate as your case was at Enoch, you acted prudently in doing as you have done. Be more cautious in future, as you will not always find so good-natured a fool as this fisherman to take you out of the water at the hazard of his own life."

life." Mahal answered him quite in a passion : " Pray tell me, Ram, why was you, who boast of wisdom, so foolish as to provoke the Sultan to such a pitch as made him sentence you to the whip and banishment ?"

Ram. What I did from an excess of understanding you did from stupidity. I had designs of a very different nature ; and had it not been for the falsehood of my confidants (for friends there are none), I should soon have divested your peevish Pooh of his divinity. And if I have been worse treated than you, it is to be recollected, that I was not his father-in-law.

Mahal. But why was you so unfeeling at my danger in the water ? and what makes you call this good man here who saved me, a fool ?

Ram. Self-preservation bids me

act thus. This self-preservation is a thing very well known upon your mountain, though it may go by a different name. I beg you will mark the word and its sense, as through it you will resolve many things that happen in you or in others. As for the fisherman, he certainly is a fool for putting his life in danger for your sake; and those who want his support would have been but very little obliged to him had he been drowned on your account.

Mahal sighed, and said: "I have again learned a new word!"

The sun had now gained the meridian; and his beams darting fire, the whole group retired to a small wood, where the fisherman made Mahal a bed of moss, and hung his wet clothes upon the trees to dry. Mahal, tired as he was, soon fell into a sound sleep.

Ram

Ram followed his example ; while the honest fisherman busied himself with mending his net, and turning Mahal's clothes to dry. While they were fast asleep, a heavy tempest began to gather over their heads. Suddenly, tremendous peals of thunder awoke them, and the fisherman advised them to quit the wood as expeditiously as possible, as the lightning used frequently to fall into it. But he had not quite uttered these words, before a vivid flash of the angry element struck him dead at their feet. Mahal and Ram were likewise so much hurt by the shock, that they remained senseless for several minutes. Having recovered a little, Ram immediately perceived the body of the fisherman, and sarcastically exclaimed : "*Now thou hast got thy reward !*" Mahal, on the contrary, overwhelmed with grief at the

fatal death of his bounteous friend and deliverer, cried : " Lord, whose hand throws down the lightning, why hast thou done this ? Why hast thou slain the saviour of my life ? Why hast thou spared him that laughed at my peril ? "

Ram, offended at Mahal's ejaculation, answered with contempt : " He who you say throws down the lightning, probably killed this fool for having saved the life of thee who art a still greater fool ! "

Mahal trembled, and said : " Thou blasphemest the Lord, whose thunder is still roaring in the distant sky ! "

Ram. What are you chattering now ? Had you not acted like a fool at Pooh's court, you would not have been obliged to fly ; had you not been obliged to fly, you would not have gone into the boat ; had you not
gone

gone into the boat, it would not have been dashed to pieces against the rock; had not the boat gone to pieces against the rock, you would not have been in danger of being drowned; had you not been in danger of being drowned, you would not have cried and moaned like a dastard; had you not cried and moaned like a dastard, you would not have induced this fool to save you; had he not saved you, he would have quietly remained in the islet to mend his net; had he quietly remained in the islet to mend his net, he would not have come into this wood, which he said is often struck with lightning; had he not come into this wood, the lightning, which was to fall upon this spot, and not upon any other, would not have killed him; consequently you
or

or the benefit conferred upon you has killed the fool.

The Caliph. Oh, the audacious wretch !

Ben Hafi. Ram now said : " Be at least grateful enough to bury your deliverer. I do not think he was an inhabitant of the wise city of Irad, which lies on those hills. I would have you go thither, and you shall learn many new things. I am now hastening to a land which is governed, they say, by a sultan philosopher."

Mahal begged Ram to stay with him a little longer to explain himself; but the latter answered : " I shun thee, and do not choose to see thee again. Thy company begets danger and destruction, as the boat and this corpse plainly attest."

At these words Ram fled, and disappeared

appeared in the wood, while Mahal stood quite bewildered, and cried with a sigh: " Can God have killed this good man because he saved me? Would he then be just? For doing a good and generous action has the fisherman perished? and shall Sultan Pooh, who with his whole court riots in luxury and dissipation, be allowed to live at Enoch? Alas! the Lord would not take my part when they wanted to mutilate me; yet, to defend him, I provoked the resentment of the idolaters upon my head!"

With heartfelt sorrow he long surveyed the remains of the poor fisherman; wept, dug a hole in the earth, and committed them to its bosom. Then crossing the bridge, he advanced to the city of Irad.—The sultan of this place—

The Grand Vizier. What, another
 I sultan?

sultan ? Must their sacred character always be the subject of your dull tales ? Why do not you entertain his Highness with magicians, fairies, genii, and other spirits ?

The Caliph. Ben Hafi's tales may be dull ; but surely they are not so because sultans are the principal subject of them. Indeed, what can interest one more than the rulers of the world ? I like to be in company with my equals : and a tale without a sultan acting the first part in it is not worth hearing. Yet I must confess, that I like the tales of sultans mixed with the wonders of the world, of fairies and spirits ; and if Ben Hafi will blend his tales with them, I shall be glad to hear him.

Ben Hafi. I will follow my manuscript, and tell no falsehood for any one.

The

The Sultan of Irad was assembled with his counsellors in the divan, to deliberate upon the most important, newest, most singular and unheard of thing on which a sultan has ever deliberated in his divan. Your Highness will perhaps believe, that the wise men of Irad enquired, " Whether it would be better to wear a long or a short beard ? What was virtue, and whether it was wanted in a state ? Whether it was innate or taught ? Whether the sultan was on the throne for the sake of his subjects, or whether his subjects existed for the sake of him ? Whether it would be best for men to be free or to be slaves, as in the latter case they must still earn their bread ? Whether the dignity of Sultan was an office like every other office, or only a bright sine-cure ?

cure ? If man belonged to the beasts of burden, how large a load he would in such case be able to carry ?” But none of these questions, Lord of Believers, made the subject of the Sultan’s deliberations.

The Caliph. I am not much disposed now to guess, though I suppose the Sultan consulted how to render his people very happy and contented. If I have not guessed right, I command you to tell me immediately what it was.

Ben Hafi. I obey your Highness. Sultan Zobar of Irad deliberated with his counsellors, how to contrive to get into his hands all the gold of his subjects ; that is to say, how to make himself chief treasurer, cashier, and keeper of all their gain and revenues, and only to leave them as much at
their

their disposal as might enable them to work on in his service, and get more.

The Caliph. Thou railest, Ben Hafi! Can you call a thing that happens every day a novelty unheard of?

Ben Hafi. I meant, that before the flood it was unheard of. I know very well that sultans manage it quite differently since.

The Caliph. What occasion was there for the Sultan of Irad to consult his divan about seizing all the gold of his subjects? He only needed to take, as they were obliged to give; and my viziers can prove, that all they possessed belonged to the Sultan, though I am rather doubtful of the truth of their assertion.

Ben Hafi. Doubts are certainly justifiable on such a subject. In other respects, the Sultan of Irad might
safely

safely have acted as you say, after the flood. But before it, there would have been some danger in adopting such a conduct at Irad, since the Iradians claimed certain rights of their own.

The Caliph. Rights ! Rights ! What do you mean by rights ? I never heard such a thing mentioned in my divan.

Ben Hafi. For instance : to call a thing by its right name, provided it was the right name, and could not be construed a different way. But as the viziers of Irad had reserved to themselves the privilege of construing words, the speaker was obliged to be very cautious how he made use of this right. Farther, to laugh if somebody tickled them, and to cry if they were beat or otherwise hurt. To murmur, if they did reluctantly what they were bid, provided the Sultan's officers

officers did not overhear them. To eat and drink what they could pay for. To play the fool publicly whenever they liked, and even to make their own children, if they would take the trouble, or their wives pleased. All these rights, so hateful to the Sultan of Irad, might have been conquered by his Highness in the long run; but the Iradians worshipped gold as their god, and this was the great difficulty. Men, you know, don't like to be deprived of their god, especially if it is not the true God, but an idol. For this they would risk their lives, and even the obedience they owe to the Sultan.

The Caliph. Horrid idolatry!

Ben Hafi. And one of the ills, they say, which have not been quite washed away by the flood.—So for the above stated reason the Sultan of Irad

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was

was obliged to be very cautious how he conducted himself in such a delicate business.

The Caliph. I trust to his Divan for settling it.

Ben Hafi. Your Highness's trust reflects honour on your experience, and the counsellors of Irad's Divan knew very well that their god was not in danger, and could only gain as much more value and weight, as the god of those who were not viziers and statesmen would lose. While Zobar sat thus deliberating in his Divan at Irad, Mahal entered the gates of the city. An armed man pointed a lance at him, asking our traveller these questions: "Whither? Whence? Wherefore?" Mahal answering him very civilly, that he was one of the sons of Seth, who came from the mountain, and travelled to learn the wisdom

wisdom and knowledge of men, the armed man, according to custom, ordered one of his comrades to conduct him to the Sultan. The Sultan permitted him to enter; and being still occupied with the momentous business I told you before, he asked him very eagerly, "What bringest thou, stranger?"

Mahal (very solemnly). Sultan of Irad, I bring thee the fear of God.

Sultan Zobar. None of that, stranger! We only dread poverty here. Hast got gold?

As Mahal answered this important question with a phlegmatic *no*, the counsellors one after the other disdainfully exclaimed: "He is a worthless fellow! He is no man! He has no gold!"

He was then rudely turned out of doors, and the Divan resumed their deliberations.

Mahal was quite at a loss to divine the real sense of the question, and the cause of this singular reception. At Pooh's court he wanted no gold, as his attendants were his pursebearers; and at his flight he had not thought of supplying himself with that necessary article. "No gold!" exclaimed he, left alone in the middle of the street. "No gold! And is it for this they turned me out, and must I remain in the streets because I have no gold? This is, I dare say, the news which Ram told me I should learn here. This Sultan of Irad is certainly no giant, but much taller and stronger than my puny son-in-law: but the question is, if he be better and more reasonable for that."

Mahal looked about himself a great while, to see if nobody would speak to him: his eyes followed every one, but
every

every one passed by without taking the least notice of him. He thought now, that the inhabitants of Irad were not so friendly and affable as those of Enoch, and imagined it proceeded from his being a stranger whom they did not know. Night coming on, and his appetite beginning to grow very keen, he ventured at last to enter a large house. The master immediately met and asked him on the threshold, who he was and what he wanted. Mahal modestly replied, "I am one of the sons of Seth, who am hungry, and want shelter under your roof?" "Hast got gold?" returned the Iradian. As he uttered his melancholy *no*, the Iradian pushed him down the steps, and called out after him, in the hearing of all those that passed that way, "A worthless thing! He has no gold!" These words re-

founded like the echo through every street : Mahal ran from house to house, but all doors were shut against him.

The Caliph. What a detestable people ! They know nothing of hospitality ; and their crime, which is the greatest on earth, God will not leave unpunished, says the Prophet.

Ben Hafi. The Iradians, Lord of Believers, will still more shock your good heart.—The contempt with which these words were repeated by the inhabitants, their scornful looks, and insulting sneers, almost wore out Mahal's patience. Hunger made him rage, the coldness of a wet and stormy night shook his frame, and he exclaimed in his despair : “ Lord, destroy those cruel men, they deserve thine anger ! They refuse shelter and a morsel of bread to the descendant of thy servant Seth, whom thou calledst

thy son ! They deny the name of man to him with whom thou hast deigned to speak ! Lord, thy wrath is just ; hard and barbarous are the inhabitants of the cities !”

The Caliph. It must be shocking to suffer hunger and cold, where bread and warmth are so near !

Ben Hafi. Yet there were men on earth, both before and after the Flood, who perished by those horrid wants. In my wanderings I have heard and seen several individuals thus oppressed ; but I will not shock farther your Highness’s generous feelings, and have said enough for this night.

The Grand Vizier. Nobody, Lord of Believers, suffers hunger or oppression in your empire.

The Caliph. I should hope so for thy own sake.

Ben Hafi was now permitted to

quit the presence of the Caliph and his court, and went away much pleased with the impression which his last words seemed to have made on the mind of the Grand Vizier.

SEVENTH EVENING.

Ben Hafi. MAHAL, who still continued shivering and hungry on the pavement of the streets, now began, for the first time, to reproach himself with folly for having left the mountain, where his flocks supported him. But since fretting would not satisfy the cravings of an empty stomach, nor the Lord hasten to punish the Iradians as he had wished, hunger and piercing cold made him attempt at last to knock at a small hut at the farther end of the city. An old man came out, and asked him who he was
and

and what he wanted. Mahal told him his story in a few words, and repeated his old request ; to which the old man returned the same answer he had received before.

Mahal. A worthless thing ! Why, am I not a man ? Am I not formed like thee ? Are not my soul and wants like thine ? And art thou not as apt to feel cold and suffer hunger as I am ?

The Old Man. Fool, for such thou art, it is thy very misfortune to feel those wants, without having gold to relieve them. The beasts feel them too ; which makes us at Irad call a beast every one that has no gold, because he must live on prey like the beast of the field. But the beast is still better off, as the law does not doom it to die for its depredations, but it pronounces

death

death upon the far more dangerous and worthless thing which is formed like thee and lives on prey.

Mahal fetched a deep groan, and remembered with tears in his eyes, his mountain, the seat of peace and innocence. "Oh!" said he to the old man, "if you will not have me subsist on prey, give me bread and shelter. To-morrow I will go farther, and quit this land of barbarity. Even should hunger make me perish, my bones shall not repose in this hard soil."

The Old Man. Fool! does this soil want your carcase? Who would pay us for burying it? But tell me, what should I give thee bread and shelter for?

Mahal. For the sake of humanity.

The Old Man. Have I not told thee, that we Iradians don't reckon as men, the things that have no gold?

Mahal.

Mahal. Then give it me for the sake of the Lord, who feeds and supports us all.

The Old Man. Fool, behold the skin of my hands hardened with labour, behold my sunburnt face! Work supports us, and nothing else. Gold is the god of Irad, we know no other, and he alone makes us what we are.

Mahal, turning pale at this blasphemy, began again to damn all mankind. The old man seemed all the while to be pausing at something; and soon after he brought our traveller to the light, looked at and examined his body, felt his hands and neck, and measured the breadth and length of his back, saying: "For a beast of burden thou mayest do well enough. I lost one lately, and if thou wantest me to give thee bread and shelter,

Shelter, take this spade : my nephew shall lead thee to an adjacent field, the moon shines beautifully clear, turn up the earth that I may sow to-morrow, and return hither when I whistle ; and thou shalt have meat and drink, and a place to rest upon. At day-break, I shall load and drive thee to market.

Mahal took the spade, considered his treatment as a deserved punishment, went with the boy to the field, and laboured till midnight, when he returned at the sound of the whistle to the old man's, who gave him some bread, and, pushing him afterwards into a dark place where he kept his beasts of burden, immediately shut and bolted the door upon him, muttering, " Things that have no gold are dangerous."

When the old man was loading
Mahal

Mahal in the morning with a number of heavy baskets, he said to him :
 " Look, stranger ; those who are without gold must lend their hands and back, that those who want them may get gold by them. Though thou hast no gold, yet thou art worth it like any other useful domestic animal. And if thou doest as much as thy strength will allow, thou never shalt want for bread and shelter ; for we even spare the beast for the sake of our interest."

Mahal bent his broad back, heard patiently what the old man told him, and ruminating on his way and beneath his burden upon the sense of his words, he soon found his new master, who was walking behind him, give energy and force with his cudgel to what he had learned of Ram. The populace in the streets cried out :
 " A good

“ A good strong beast you have got, old man ; it has a nice neck and back ; if it plays no bad pranks, it will be worth its food.”

In this manner was Mahal obliged to carry every morning large loads to the market, and passed afternoons, evenings, and the best of moonlight nights, labouring in the field. Each day he cleared up some new point of human life, which grew hourly more insupportable to him. Often would he thus lament his fate in the stable :
 “ How bright and cheerfully did the sun rise on the mountain, and how dull and hateful does it appear to me in this humid dirty hole ! There the songs of the birds, and the rushing of the waters from the rocks, would second my morning song. Gentle breezes fanned my locks during my soft repose ; the rich milk of my flocks
 fed

fed me, and my wife and daughter entertained and pleased me by their solicitude and friendly conversation. I was happy till the moment when the unruly desire of knowledge rose in my breast. Then the melody of the birds and the rustling of the waters charmed me no more, and I sung no morning song to the God of my fathers. Storms and tempests raged about my head, and I was disgusted with the bland conversation of my family. Now must I walk bent under burdens, and the cruel driver that walks behind me calls me his beast. My bones almost break beneath heavy loads, the parching sun drives the sweat from my brow, and moistens my beard; and my tears frequently quench my consuming thirst."

The old man, being satisfied with Mahal's strength and industry, did not fail

fail to instruct him at each scanty meal, and even condescended once to let him accompany his nephew to the school of Irad, that he might plainly see the value of *gold*, and acknowledge the god of its inhabitants.

When he arrived at this school, he saw a true picture of misery and starvation in rags and tatters, who had hired himself for bread and a dwelling to instruct the youths of the Iradians in the sole science which they wanted to learn. He stood on an elevated chair: children of various sizes were seated round him, and behind them such of their parents as wished to convince themselves of the progress their boys had made. The science of the Iradians was already completed, and compressed within so small a circle, that it was explained in common sayings or maxims, pretty similar to what

we now call moral precepts ; but with this difference, that the Iradians followed those maxims practically, while we generally content ourselves with the mere theory of modern ethics.

The ragged schoolmaster, having a good while exerted his voice and lungs upon the subject of Iradian science, asked the boys, one by one, the following questions, to try their attention, and to convince the parents of the improvement they made under his tuition.

Question. What is the supreme good men ought to aim at ?

Answer. Gold.

Q. Why is it gold ?

A. Because it alone leads men to the means of true happiness, to the esteem of their fellow-citizens, to universal enjoyment and genuine perfection.

Q. What should therefore be the chief

chief end of every rational man in this short and miserable life ?

A. To amass gold.

Q. Very well, child ! But tell me, are all the means tending to gain and amass gold equally good and lawful ?

A. They all are equally good, if they answer the chief end ; but not all lawful.

Q. How should the prudent man therefore regulate his conduct ?

A. If he make use of means prohibited by law, he should take care to do it sily, or in such a manner, at least, that the law may not apply to his case. As this conduct is very difficult, and premises great talents and experience, it is consequently more esteemed by one's fellow-citizens than the use of direct and common means.

Q. Capital, my dear ! But let your neighbour tell me, whether one may commit murder for the sake of gold.

A. No; and that for one's own benefit, as nobody would otherwise be able long to keep his gold safe from the attempts of his fellow-citizens.

Q. Is there not a science which makes a very essential means of getting and procuring gold? and what is its name?

A. Arithmetic, or the science of numbers.

Q. How should a man regulate his conduct in respect to strangers and foreigners in general?

A. Strangers and foreigners may and ought to be cheated for the love of gold and our country. They may also be subdued by war, reduced to slavery, fed with as much as is necessary to keep them alive, and forced to work. Should they resist compulsion, under the pretence of injustice and violence, they may be lawfully put to death as traitors to the state;
but

but the best way to kill them would be by working, because work fetches gold.

Q. What is the highest virtue?

A. Wealth.

Q. What is the blackest crime, the vilest infamy?

A. Poverty.

Q. How do we call the thing that has no gold?

A. Worthless. It is not even counted among human beings, since it is a mere tool in the hands of him who has got gold. Many go so far as to deny it all sense and reason.

Q. And very justly too!—But pray what do you call one in rags if he has got gold?

A. A wonder and prodigy of all goodness, favour, beauty and perfection: he is a sage and a sultan among men.

Q. Very true, children! Make it

then your business to get as rich as your parents, and you will be saved for ever. Now I could wish to know, what deserves the highest reverence in the universe?

A. Gold.

Q. Why?

A. Because it is the most perfect being in the universe, and grants every perfection to its possessors.

Q. What is gold?

A. It is the god we worship.

Q. Why do we worship him?

A. Because he makes us happy; and man is born for happiness, or at least should be happy.

Q. Are there no other gods besides him?

A. Yes, there is one called the old invisible God.

Q. Should we also pay homage to him?

A. It

A. It could not hurt us, since he is said to have made gold. Our ancestors also said, that he has power, if he chooses, to help men to the possession of gold. It may perhaps have been so in their time; but now he gives away nothing to any body, and every one must strive to gain gold by his own labour or cunning. As the homage paid him consists, however, of mere words and thoughts, it may be cheaply afforded him.

Q. Are the nations around us of our way of thinking?

A. All clear-sighted and enlightened nations, be they far or near, think and act as we do, and worship the same god; yet they are not all so sincere as openly to avow their sentiments as we do. Most of them are hypocrites, and the Iradian alone is honest enough to tell his mind.

Schoolmast. Very well, my dear disciples ; your parents, I hope, are contented with you, and through you with me ; for I need their approbation.

Now the ragged and emaciated teacher began the following prayer with great enthusiasm, while the eyes of every one of his pupils were fixed with rapturous devotion at the word GOLD, which was painted on the wall above his chair :

“ Most splendid and most excellent Gold ! thou that shinest in the visible creation, like the sun in the vaults of heaven, when thou investest him at daybreak with thy fair, radiant robe ! Without thee he would plunge into obscurity ; and, as soon as thou divestest him of thy borrowed garments, he ceases to be, and resembles the wretch that has not found grace in thine eyes. But that we might worship

ship thee amidst the black shades of night, thou hast covered numberless stars with thy refulgent brilliancy.

O, that we could ascend to the sun, and the planets, and the fixed stars, to rob them of their unnecessary and precious habiliments ! King, chief of all nature, to whom all mankind bend the knee, from the mighty sultan to the shivering beggar ! for whom and in whom is all life ! thou distributest all the virtues, all the perfections ! Thou pourest life's choicest enjoyments over thy elect favourites. Alas ! I am none of their number. All that men invent and produce, comes through and by thee. Man, without thee, would live with the ferocity of wild beasts. Thou hast first developed the capacities of his mind, the instincts of his heart, and the strength of his body ; and to thee he owes all the fruits of his

his understanding and his art. For
 thee the thinker wakes whole nights ;
 for thee the ploughman sweats in the
 field ; for thee the warrior scorns
 his noble life, that he may at once
 taste it in plenitude. The joys of life
 surround all those whom thou hast
 elected. All are working, growing,
 and existing to gratify their senses.
 Thou art their god, and Voluptuous-
 ness, thy daughter, is their goddess.
 For them blooms the tender virgin ;
 like the young rose that expands her
 buds, they pluck her at the first sign
 of maturity, from the stem of inno-
 cence on which her mother has reared
 and guarded her for thy sake. For
 them the earth bears fruits and herbs,
 the sea feeds them with rare fishes,
 the woods with delicate game, and
 the air with dainty fowls. The only
 complaint thy favourites have to urge
 is, that their senses are not more nu-
 merous,

merous, and that those they have lose their relish and energy by enjoyment. But even then they find consolation in thy dazzling and cheering radiancy. For thou graatest them wit, authority, respect, power and impunity; and there is nothing that thy possessors may not attempt. High and proud may they carry their heads; those whom thou rejectest creep before them in the dust, are trampled under foot, and look up from the dust to thy divinely chosen!

“ O being of beings! Creator of all arts and sciences! Thou spring of society! Great and most puissant enchanter! Like the greatest monarch in the creation, thou throneest in its centre, and attractest by thy transcendent lustre all the beings remarkable for wit, spirit, and art! The very son of raw ignorance, that
only

only lives through his animal instinct, smiles if thy rays encircle him; the darkness of ignorance turns serene, and animal instinct grows refined. All the social beings move in thy sphere, and each of them strains every nerve to outstrip his neighbour, in order to be the nearest to thy sanctuary!

“ Without thee, powerful enchanter, the wheels of society would suddenly stand still; all the virtues would vanish with the crimes, and the death of all moral powers would speedily ensue. O Gold, thou toilsome object of human pursuit! to thee virgins and matrons sell their chastity. the thinker the truth, the statesman his sultan and his country, the magistrates justice, the monarch the lives and happiness of his subjects! For thy smiles the man of understanding condescends to be the scoff of the fool, and

and even flatters him ! For thee pride
 curbs its iron neck, and exercises its
 tongue in smooth adulation ! For
 thee I sell to the wise and noble citi-
 zens of Irad the days of my life, and
 still thou fliest me, and my gain is
 stale bread and tasteless water !

“ Thou makest man endure all !
 By thee the coward becomes brave,
 and the idle active ! Thou dispellest
 even the black horrors of death, the
 sad lot of humanity, which, besides
 its plaguing precursors, not even thy
 favourites can escape, were they raised
 in the centre of thy magnificence.
 They must die like us wretched pau-
 pers ; they must part with thy beam
 for the eternal darkness of the grave ;
 but in defiance of death and its hor-
 rors, what exploits will not thy fa-
 vourites achieve for thy sake ?

“ O most glorious and most sub-
 lime

lime Gold! look down graciously upon thy chosen people! illumine me with the bright rays of thy splendor! shun our neighbours, and be alone and exclusively our god! No people on earth worship thee as we do! By thee the Iradian coveteth dominion over all nations, and will surely obtain it, if thou be propitious! Descend upon us, potent Gold! and since we shall not be able to overcome by thy power the grim tyrant death and his plaguy attendants, bear with us, and remain faithful and auspicious to those whom we must leave behind us, and to whom we shall bequeath what thou hast granted us of thy divine substance."

The Caliph. How did Mahal behave during this execrable, blasphemous lesson?

Bên Hafi. Justly your Highness calls

calls it execrable ; but it is still more execrable, that in the most execrable things that can be fancied or asserted of men, there is always more truth than one supposes. As to Mahal, he heard this new doctrine at first with trembling surprise, then with grief, and at last with rage. He gave way to this passion, upbraided the Iradians in strong terms with their folly, announced to them the wrath of the Almighty, his mission, and their impending destruction.

The whole audience cried, " Is the beast of burden mad ? How durst this worthless thing rave, that has nothing but the shape and tongue of a man ? It raves heresy, and corrupts our youth ! (*To the Schoolmaster*) Give us rods, that we may chastise this monster before our children. We will

will teach it how to behave before men."

The teacher brought rods: the boys fell upon Mahal, stripped him with wanton petulance, and were just going to lacerate his broad back, when a messenger of state stepped in, and informed the company, that Mahal must immediately follow him to Sultan Zobar.

The Caliph. I am very glad of this. I do not like to see any man flogged, not even in a tale; I feel every stroke they give him.

Ben Hafi. Peace be with you, friend of mankind! But methinks you did not seem to feel that pity when Ram was flogged at Enoch.

The Caliph. This is quite a different case. This Ram was a blasphemous and false traitor, who attacked
the

the government of the Sultan of Enoch and his Viziers.

Ben Hafi. Dread Lord, your remark is forcible to my understanding. My tale is ended for this night, and I crave permission to go to rest.

The Caliph. Peace be with thee, Ben Hafi! Thy prayer is granted.

EIGHTH EVENING.

BEN HAFI arrived in due time, unrolled his manuscript, and thus continued his story.

The Iradians, dread successor of the Prophet, answered the Sultan's messenger who came to fetch Mahal : " Let us first chastise him ; he is an heretic, and was just blaspheming the god of our country. You see he is only the beast of burthen of this youth's uncle ; let us first scourge him well, then he shall follow you."

The Messenger. Never mind, but let him instantly go. The Sultan is in
a very

a very great passion, and will no doubt give him his due. Besides, should he even get clear off from his Highness, you will always have plenty of leisure to scourge him.

The Iradians. You acknowledge then the right we have to whip him, though he is summoned to appear before the Sultan?

As the messenger did not in the least dispute this right, they quietly delivered up Mahal into his hands.

Zobar, the Sultan of Irad, had received the following message from Sultan Pooh of Enoch :

“We Pooh I. Sultan of Enoch, the magnificent, the grand, the divine, descended in straight and spotless line from the sons of God Aza and Azael, by our mother the fair Namah—These mighty spirits, placed around the throne of the old god,

begot our great ancestor, the terror of the old world, with the beauteous Naamah, the offspring of Cain. The power, the force, the wisdom, and magic which they imparted to our ancestor, were fully transmitted to us. We, therefore, the descendant of God, send to Zobar, Sultan in Irad, begotten of man and born of woman, health and greeting.

“ We require thee, by these presents, to send us immediately to our superb city of Enoch, the most antient and most celebrated on earth, Mahal, the man of the old mountain, of the generation of Seth. This man of the mountain has committed a daring outrage against our majesty : nevertheless we pardoned him, since he is related to us through our Sultaneſs his daughter ; and we intended to have raised him to one of the first dignities

in our empire. But whereas he has taken flight from our superb city, and resides, as we learn by our emissaries; in thy country; we do not doubt thy readiness and compliance, and shall acknowledge the service. The expences we will pay, as it is meet for our liberality to do. The rulers of men owe each other such reciprocal services, that the offenders against their majesty may find no asylum or protection on the wide earth. We recommend thee to the keeping of our divine ancestor, the mighty Gedim.

“ Done in our superb city of Enoch, in the third moon of the year one thousand five hundred and seventy-six.

(Signed) POOH,

“ Son of the Sons of God Aza and Azael, Sultan of Enoch the most ancient city in the world.”

When Sultan Zobar had read this message, he was going to kill the bearer on the spot. He already grasped his mighty spear, when his courtiers prostrated themselves, and supplicated him to moderate his choler. Pooh's messenger alone stood still, and, recollecting the dignity of him that had sent him, spiritedly said : " Kill me, Sultan of Irad, if you do not respect a Sultanic messenger, and prove that you do not know what you owe to your own station."

This bold remonstrance soon made Zobar think of other means : he recollected the dignity which a Sultan ought to keep up before his court, dismissed the messenger from his presence, and perused the message once more, which only served to augment his rage. He violently shook his spear, and none of the surrounding

courtiers

courtiers could as yet guess the real cause of his indignation. He finally issued orders to go in search of Mahal; and all the messengers now gave chase to our mountaineer, who being among the beasts of burden, they had a great deal of trouble to find him out by their enquiries. At last they brought him before the offended monarch, who stood in the middle of the audience-hall resting on his lance, and with a wild stare thus addressed Mahal: "Quickly tell me who thou art, whence thou comest, and in what manner thou gavest offence to the sottish Pooh? How thou, worthless thing, camest into this city, and what thou doest to live? I remember to have seen thee once before talking nonsense."

Mahal. My name is Mahal. I

spring from Seth, and the thirst for knowledge drove me, a foolish man, from the mountain of innocence and tranquillity.

Sultan Zobar. Pshaw ! Idle talk ! Thou didst well to come hither to the fountain of knowledge and wisdom. My people trade and deal with all the nations of the earth, cheat them all, and none knows the value of gold so well as the Iradians.

Mabal. This I have found to my sorrow. I descended from the mountain with my daughter, slept in a cavern, and armed men took her from me. I returned sad to the mountain, murmured, and still longed to see the vallies, the cities, and their inhabitants. The Creator of the world appeared to me, chid me for my complaints, and sent me off again to learn

to

to know men. Alas ! I have seen them ! The Lord also told me how wroth he was against them, and that he had resolved their destruction, unless they changed for the better.

Sultan Zobar. He must be very wroth indeed ! We too well feel how hard it is to get gold. Yet we are the best people on earth, and he cannot mean to threaten us. —Go on.

Mabal. Arrived at Enoch, I found my daughter married to the Sultan of the country. I was very much astonished to find him a puny, weak and peevish being, instead of a robust, powerful and huge giant. Perceiving that little Pooh suffered himself to be called God before his ignorant subjects, his impious pride roused my indignation, and I vindicated the cause of the true God in the face of the people

ple of Enoch, and publicly exposed the Sultan's folly.

Sultan Zobar. (With a loud burst of laughter, which was re-echoed in louder peals among the crowd of his courtiers.)

Well done, Mahal! O the puny wretch! Behold me, man of the mountain, and see the difference! The spirit which animates me is felt by all, as far as the roaring sea which dashes its billows upon the coast of my empire! He a son of God! Give me leave to know better. I, who invented the sword, the spear and the shield, who broke the steed and trained him for war—I, who am so nearly related to the Gods, must surely know his mongrel pedigree."

Mahal was much frightened at these words, and smiled bitterly. Zobar however, construing his smile in his
own

own favour, thus went on: "Thou hast done right to check his mad presumption. Suppose Gedim descended from the gods, the effeminate race of the Enochers has long ago degenerated, and is become ignoble and obscure. What are Aza and Azael to Alfazal, the god of war, the teacher and father of my house? His valour and courage concentrate in me, and I am on earth what he is in heaven. If he carries on the wars of the old God against the rebellious spirits in heaven, I carry on those of the earth for the young, fair and splendid god Gold. But your Pooh is a common understrapper, and I'll be avenged of the rascal. Tell me, thou thread-bare thing, how didst thou escape starvation in Irad?"

Mahal. I serve a hard-hearted old
man

man for my daily bread as his beast of burden, and till his field.

Sultan Zobar. Since my mother is descended from Seth, I will protect thee. Thou hast my leave to remain in Irad as a beast of burden.

Ben Hafi. Mahal thought this a strange kindness, but would not evince his surprise at such unexpected favour. He ventured, however, to complain of the inhabitants of Irad, who wanted to scourge him for having spoken against their god.

Sultan Zobar. Blaspheme Gedim the god of Pooh as much as thou pleasest, but never dare attack again the god Alfazal, my ancestor, nor Gold, the god of my people. By these we live. Since thou hast told the truth to Pooh, and thy daughter is a sultaneß, I pardon thee this once,
and

and will take thy broad back under my protection. Depart till I send for thee. Work and strive hard to appease the god of my people, to gain his bright favour, and endeavour to acquire the name of man in this empire.

Mahal returned to his old master, who severely took him to task for his heresy in the school, and bitterly reproached himself with having brought a beast of burden in the company of reasonable men.

Zobar withdrew with his Grand Vizier to an adjoining apartment, and read Pooh's message. The Vizier turned pale, and uttered the most shocking invectives against the arrogant ruler of Enoch.

Zobar, who had listened to his minister with a smile, now said to him :
 " Let us make war upon this Pooh,
 rob

rob him of his country, of his gold and his subjects, and dash his idols to pieces. This bold message will inflame the resentment of the Iradians, and the war will give me the keys of their imprisoned god. If I once make them poor, I'll buy their pretended rights with their own gold, and purchase them on my own terms."

The Grand Vizier applauded this resolution; the Divan was summoned to meet; and Pooh's message being read to them, they called out with one voice: War! Plunder! Devastation! Death!

Sultan Zobar then gave orders to dispatch the following message to Pooh:

"Sultan Zobar, whose valour is the proverb of the world; Zobar, the ruler of the rich and spirited Iradians, the son of the God Alfazal, the
inventor

inventor of spears, swords and shields,
 the tamer of the steed, the leader of
 bloody battles—Our ancestor carries
 on the wars of the old God against
 the rebellious spirits in heaven: We,
 his descendant, march to combat
 against those who offend us on earth—
 We, the Sultran Zobar, with whom
 no earthly prince durst compare him-
 self, send thee, son of dust, our sove-
 reign hatred and contempt. Behold!
 we arm ourselves with murder and
 desolation, to be revenged of thee for
 having called thyself the son of the
 mighty spirits of heaven; likewise for
 having dared to call us, in whose form
 the godship of our ancestor is plainly
 expressed, *a mortal man*! Us, who by
 our dread exploits have proved our
 origin! who possess the magic art to
 rule men as we do!

“However, the days are not many,
 ere

ere we shall prove to thee by a superior spirit and bloody feats what thou art, and who we are. We are arming ; and thou, thy fair city, and thy gold, with that of thy subjects, shall be our booty. We will deliver the god we worship from thy vile bondage ; nor will we lay down our spear before thou shalt have acknowledged our divinity and thy mortal frailties. Mahal, the man of the mountain, who sought refuge among us, thou shalt not have.

“ ZOBAR.”

A declaration of war was immediately issued throughout the empire of Irad, and the people took up arms, and collected in strong bodies. Zobar, being ready to take the field, sent again for Mahal, and thus spoke to him :

“ Man of the mountain ! As thou
art

art an offspring of Seth thou shalt march with me and my brave warriors into the heart of Pooh's dominions. It will cost me something to keep thee in food, and gold is too scarce to give away. As Pooh is thy son-in-law, thou mayest perhaps serve me in exciting the malecontents of Enoch against him, and this honour is thy reward. Be valiant in battle, and strive to take as much booty as will make thee a man in Irad.

Mahal, who had observed the great preparations that were making by the Iradians, but dared not ask what they were for, as he knew the people despised him too much to give him an answer, now asked the Sultan with his wonted simplicity : "What is war?"

Sultan Zobar was much surprised at this simple question; but being in good humour at the happy progress

of his secret wishes, he condescended to make the following reply :

“Blockhead ! Thou askest what war is ! It is the darling game of the Sultans, in which their subjects stake their lives and properties, and the survivors bring home scars, wounds, and laurels of renown. The Sultans alone can be winners. War is the noblest passion, the great hunt of mankind, which is the privilege of Sultanic sportsmen. As for the rest, you will soon see how it goes.”

Mahal. But why do you play this sanguinary game, in which your subjects stake their all, and you alone are the winner ?

Sultan Zobar. O the simple thing ! Suppose I were to tell thee it is for thy sake ?

Mahal. For my sake ! Then you may as well let it alone. Ill treated

as I am by your people, I don't wish them the game you will play at their sole expence.

Sultan Zobar. It is not quite so much for thy sake that I should fight for thee without good recompense; thy seeking refuge here is only the accidental occasion of it. Sultan Pooh demanded thee by his message, and, by the brightness of Gold! I would have surrendered thee that instant—for what should I care for such a fool?—had he not offended me by calling himself a son of God, and me a mortal man. Now his subjects shall pay for it; we will kill and rob them, ravish their women, lay waste their country, and thou shalt rejoice with me at the havoc of my vengeance. Get thee gone, and arm thyself.

Mahal retired in a deep reverie, and

said to himself: " Because I would not become a mutilated judge at Enoch, and Pooh has offended, this terrible madman, shall the subjects of both countries cut each others throats, and the greater cut-throat become the ruler? What a man am I to have visited these people, and have occasioned such dire scenes? The Lord bade me search the source of human actions; I see it, but cannot trace its origin. The words Ram taught me show, that the instincts of men are bad. But why must they have bad instincts? Such as they are, they are not good for much. But why are they so? Could not they be better?"

Mahal now followed Zobar at the head of his army. Entering the enemy's territory, they surprised the cottagers and townsmen in their dwellings, laid waste the cultivated fields,
mur-

murdered the men, and ravished the women on the heaps of the slain. This horrid scene made Mahal's heart bleed : his tears rolled down his beard, and he exclaimed : " What monsters are they that ravage the earth, and kill its inhabitants like sheep ! Lord, thou hast put off too far the term of their destruction ! Hasten to consummate thy decree ! "

To the Sultan he said : " Have these unfortunate beings likewise offended thee by a message, that thou shouldest slay or cause them to be slain ? "

Sultan Zobar (surveying the field of carnage and devastation with the contented look of the reaper that views the sheaves he has cut down). The nations must expiate the folly of their Sultans. Kill, rob, and hold thy

tongue, that thou mayest become a being to be reckoned among men.

Mahal moaned over the bodies of the slain. "Nations," said he, "must expiate the folly of their Sultans ! What terrible new words must I hear ! And why ? why should Sultans rage, and nations suffer that are guiltless ? But which are the greater fools, those who cut each others throats for two madmen, or the two madmen who with one word excite nation to exterminate nation ? Lord, explain this to me, or let my spirit become as obscure as the darkness which covered the chaos before 'thou createdst the world ! Are these men like me ? How can they be so cruel and profligate, yet at the same time execute so many good and great enterprises ? Thou, Lord, art great, mighty and perfect ;
but

but something must be deranged in these men, and in this thy creation. There must be a defect somewhere, but this somewhere is hidden from reason."

The Caliph. Your Mahal now runs on as madly as those idolaters.

Ben Hafi. This is the result of his inquiries; and the man who scrutinizes the mysterious ways in which God leads the human race, will never meet with better success.

The Caliph. God is great! In him is the beginning and the end.

Ben Hafi. Sultan Pooh almost burst with choler, when he read Zobar's answer to his message. It cut him through the very heart. But as soon as he heard of the vast warlike preparations making by his bold and implacable enemy, his fright nearly killed him. The warm interest which

his courtiers and the majority of his subjects testified in his cause, at last made him recover his spirits. They all took the insult to themselves, and their humanity could not bear that any one should doubt the divinity of their chief. The Enochers reckoned it the highest glory to be governed by a son of God. They of course did every thing that was in the power of men and subjects. An army was quickly collected; but it was a circumstance much to be regretted, that the son of God did not himself possess a little more real manhood, and that he had trained the chiefs of his warriors more in the ceremonials of his court, than in those movements and evolutions which serve to render an army victorious. But this was never thought of; they trusted in the Sultan's godship, in the justice of his cause,

cause, brought offerings to Gedim his ancestor; and, when Zobar had laid waste all the frontiers, they began to march against him. Sultan Pooh, not having fixed any ceremonial for his august person in the field, and finding the time would be too short to plan one, thought proper to stay at home, where he went on in his usual way as long as it would last.

Sultan Zobar was charmed with the sight of Pooh's army. He called out to his warriors: "Victory! Behind these cowards lies Enoch! There lies your God! Behold his splendour! Rouse, and rid him from bondage!"

These words did more wonders than the word Liberty does among the nations after the Flood. Pooh's army was cut down by the Iradians high inspired by their glittering God. Ma-
hal-

hal stood on a hill, murmuring and complaining. " It cannot be right," cried he, " with those Sultans, and those men who suffered themselves to be slaughtered for them ! There is a flaw somewhere ; and this horrid, barbarous, and at the same time admirable creature man cannot be quite complete !"

The Caliph. It is so, Ben Hafi. The completion is beyond the grave : in the gardens of that world, there we shall first become what we ought to be ; and there every one will be rewarded as he merits. Mahal should have thought of all this.

Ben Hafi. Lord of Believers, before the Flood they had not the book which teaches us happier men those doctrines of promise, and renders millions so patient and tame in this life.

The

The Caliph. Well, if they had not
 the book, they were not deserving
 of it.

Ben Hafi. When Sultan Zobar sat
 down with his army before Enoch;
 when his warriors took it by storm;
 killed all the inhabitants, who on their
 knees begged for their lives; plun-
 dered and set fire to it; and Zobar, ex-
 ulting in his triumph, beheld the terri-
 ble scene; Mahal thus exclaimed a-
 midst the groans of the dying: "Just-
 ly, O Lord, didst thou say, The earth
 is horrid, it still smokes with the blood
 of the slain! Behold Enoch! Ah, why
 make the fair earth thus long a prey to
 murder and devastation? And all this
 happens because Mahal descended
 from the mountain! Is it for this that
 man should slay his brother? Is it for
 this women, children and old men must
 die? Is it for this the cultivated fields,
 the

the fine dwellings, and this beautiful city should be ravaged? Is it because Mahal, inspired by thee, called them idolaters, and because the sanguinary Zobar will not be called man? Indeed he has nothing human in him; and surely the evil spirit that rebelled against thee, and seduced our first mother in the garden of innocence, must have begotten him. Perhaps, Lord, it is thy will that those people who forsook thee punish one another with their own hands! Perhaps it is thy will to purge the earth in this manner, from a race which it repenteth thee to have made, because it answers so badly thy secret ends! Perhaps thou wilt produce a new race more obedient to thy will."

While the city of Enoch was consuming in smoke and flames, Mahal saw his daughter and son-in-law

brought before Sultan Zobar. Shocked as he was at the horrors before him, his heart could not help whispering to him in this moment : "Behold, this is the man who wanted thy life, because thou toldst him the truth ! This the undutiful daughter, who became faithless to her husband's bed, and would have had thee mutilated ! God is just !"

Pooh and his wife appeared before Zobar with all the dignity of their elevated station : and Mahal makes the following remarks on their deportment : " The Ex-Sultan Pooh stood as stiff and as gravely majestic before his conqueror, as I saw him the first time on his throne. I was quite amazed at it, and should suppose there must be a quite different spirit in the man born to be a Sultan." Of Milka he says : " Her pride melted, when
she

she saluted Zobar, into a smile softer and more attractive than I ever remarked in her on the mountain."

Sultan Zobar now reprehended Pooh for his conduct, in harsh, severe and insolent expressions. "How," asked he, "could such a miserable shade of a sultan call himself divine, and me, his great and invincible vanquisher, a son of man?"

Pooh answered in a firm and proud tone of language; and, to give energy to what he said, his little form grew more inflated at every word, and he raised it as high as he could, by standing on his toes. "That I am a son of God," answered he, "will appear from the manner in which I bear my reverses! That thou art a son of man, appears from the manner in which thou behavest in the flush of thy temporal successes."

Zobar.

Zobar now roared: " We will soon beat thy godship out of thee; meanwhile I use the first rights of my triumph before thy staring eyes. Thy wife is fair, a daughter of Seth; here is her father, who vainly chid thee for thy folly: she shall be my wife."

Milka readily gave her hand to Zobar. Pooh looked after her; and, turning round to Mahal, " The greatest torment I feel," said he, " is that I could not avenge the outrage thou hast committed against me and my ancestor."

The Caliph. Sultan Pooh, making allowance for his idolatry, is still a great man, and worthier of the throne than his overbearing victor.

Ben Hafi. Mahal, regardless of this greatness, only viewed his pride, and, said to himself, " Infatuated wretch!

He

He sees his subjects murdered, his city burnt, his empire laid waste, his wife taken from him; and only repines at not having killed me, who reproached him with the presumption that caused his downfall!"

The Ex-Sultan Pooh bore all with firmness; but when some warriors brought in the huge head of Gedim's image and that of his own, and contemptuously threw them at Zobar's feet, he shed a flood of tears. Zobar sarcastically asked, "Why he wept over the destruction of those lifeless idols, and coolly saw all his subjects destroyed?" Pooh was struck dumb with grief, wrapped up his face, and would not look at the beheaded stones.

That a conqueror like Zobar did not quit Enoch till it resembled a desert, every one will conceive that has read the history of ancient and modern
con-

conquerors. The surviving Enochers were driven into slavery as beasts of burthen, and he then made his triumphal entry into Irad. Rejoicings and general thanksgivings for the happy conclusion of the war were then celebrated, and every Iradian was glad for some time to have augmented his pelf; but when the expences of the war were levied on the people, they found themselves much behind hand, and the Sultan alone was gainer in the bloody game.

Sultan Pooh was now ordered to confess publicly, before the Sultan and his people, the repentance he felt at having offended Zobar, and to own that the latter alone was of divine origin. But no brilliant hope, no threats, no insults, not instant death itself, could make him condescend to such humiliation. Firm and unshaken, he faced

the insulting people; and the more they pressed him to save his life by those means, the louder he exclaimed, "I am the son of the gods Aza and Azael! Their spirit lives in me! Kill me, and make me like them!"

The Caliph. A sultan always remains a sultan, though he have lost his throne.

Ben Hafi. He continued to cry up his godship, and called Zobar a *son of man*. The provoked populace would have torn him in pieces, had not the Sultan's guards kept them off, and protected him. Zobar, despairing of reducing his proud captive by threats and insults, would now try what misery and hunger could do. This revenge appeared sweeter to him than putting him to death at once. He ordered Puoh to be guarded in sight, and to live as a worthless thing at

Irad.

Irak. He was convinced, that his subjects would treat him like every thing which their god had abandoned. The peevish Ex-Sultan now found himself suddenly in the same situation in which we saw Mahal when he first arrived at Irak. But Mahal was now at court; and though his daughter smiled on him on all occasions, yet he could never forget her unworthy project to have him mutilated.

Pooh was obliged to wander through the inhospitable streets, without shelter, without sustenance, a prey to contempt and derision. Mahal could not help pitying him, and offered him his former situation with the old taskmaster, to save him from absolute starvation. "Conduct me," answered Pooh, "to your old man; even there I will prove that I am a sultan. Though my back bend under bur-

thens, yet my spirit shall never bend to the will of an ignoble pretender of mortal pedigree !”

Mahal smiled, conducted the Ex-Sultan to the old farmer, and presented him as a beast of burthen. “ Ah,” said the taskmaster, “ this meagre, puny thing might have done very well for a sultan ; for what would not do for such a place in our times ? But, by the glitter of our God ! he will make a very bad beast of burthen. I suppose he will not want so much food—Thou wast a great gobbler, Mahal—yet we will try it. I am always at liberty to turn him off when I please.”

Sultan Pooh was now tilling the field, and strutting with loads to the market-place, with the same sultanic dignity which he formerly displayed among his courtiers. Neither the
 insults

insults of the Iradians, nor the pain and constraint which his efforts occasioned, in short, nothing could cast down his proud spirit. Sultan Zobar permitted him as quietly to live in the old taskmaster's bondage as he once had Mahal, expecting that he would at length renounce and disavow his divine lineage. But the following conversation between Mahal and Pooh will show how ill these hopes were founded.

Mahal went to see his son-in-law at his leisure time, and asked him, "How he could be mad enough, in the situation he was in, to call himself a son of the gods, while human misery pressed him thus low?"

The Ex-Sultan. How would I bear thy question, audacious man, were I not what I declare myself to be? Would I not punish thy insolence with death?

Q 3

Mahal.

Mahal. As for killing me, thou needest not be in a hurry. Thou only affectest generosity because thou hast no command. Wert thou to attempt to kill me now, my arm would soon convince thee who is the stronger.

The Ex-Sultan. A sultan's strength does not consist in a robust and heavy structure ; it consists in his spirit.

Mahal. But where dost thou show that spirit, since thou hast ceased to be Sultan ?

The Ex-Sultan. In bearing life without my former power ! in listening to thee without anger ! in making this humid and dirty hole, too vile for a beast, a throne under the weight of my body !

• *Mahal.* My fancy never went so far ; but that of a sultan must indeed be grand, to make a throne of a dunghill !

The

The Ex-Sultan. I, the only one of the divine offspring of Gedim, must live in pain, insult and ignominy, that one of the divine race may still remain on earth. And should not my mighty ancestors raise me again to my former grandeur, I shall always remain worthy of them in my humble state.

Mahal. Hope carries you a great way, I find ; that shows you are sprung from men.

The Ex-Sultan. So hope must do. If I do but live to see the day that thy daughter brings forth a son, I shall die with the certainty that my son, the sole heir of my ancestors, the sole heir of their great qualities, will rule after me the empire of my enemy. I know that Milka my spouse is blest with an offspring from my body.

Mahal. Really ? Are these thy
 Q 4. hopes ?

hopes? I will now convince thee how wofully thy godship is mistaken in this offspring. The child of whom my criminal daughter is pregnant, is no doubt the bastard of one of thy courtiers, with whom I found the perfidious Milka in the very act of adultery. When I upbraided her with the heinousness of her crime, she excused herself by telling me, that thou, son of the gods, wast not able to bless her with an heir, and that she did it for fear of being rejected from thy bed, as thou, impotent fool, hadst done with former wives. How is it now with thy heir's godship?

The Ex-Sultan (somewhat ashamed, then proudly). It is not true, because it is impossible; and I would not believe it, had I seen it with my own eyes.

Mabal. And why? for the same reason,

reason, I suppose, which makes thee take this stinking straw for a throne ?

The Ex-Sultan. It is impossible that a son of man, a subject, should touch the wife whom the Sultan has chosen ! The gods, my ancestors, would certainly have killed the profane for the mere idea of it.

Mabal. Thy gods were very quiet, however, when I surprised my faithless and undutiful daughter. And even now that Sultan Zobar, whom thou callest a man, has taken her for his wife, they are as quiet as they were then.

The Ex-Sultan. He is a sultan, and no common man ; which alters the case. And who knows what my ancestors intend by it ? For my part, I am very well satisfied, since my heir will surely reign after him in Enoch and Irad.

Mabal.

Mahal. And dost thou think Zobar will prefer the bastard to his other children ?

The Ex-Sultan. My child is divine, and Gedim will take him under his protection.

Mahal. The protection which he granted thee, ought to make thy hopes less sanguine—But thy taskmaster whistles. Go to work, for I find thou art an incorrigible fool. I shall however return once more, and do my best to reclaim thee from error and sin to the true God, whom thou hast forsaken.

It was decreed, Lord of Believers, that Mahal should not convert Sultan Pooh. The former having returned to Irad without gold, Sultan Zobar had conceived a very bad opinion of his understanding, and did not like to support him. He would, however, have

have kept him some time longer for the sake of Milka, had he not heard, that a rich Iradian had offered Mahal a large sum of that precious metal to interest him in his cause, and to make him his advocate at the Sultan's court. It was, however, Mahal's answer to this suitor which undid him with Zobar. "If thy cause is just," said he to the rich man, "why offer me thy gold to seduce me from the true God, by giving me that which thou senselessly callest thy divinity? Never shall my hands touch this accursed metal, which you amass by deceitful, barbarous, and bloody deeds, and praise with blasphemous sentiments and prayers!"

Sultan Zobar, when he heard of this heresy, immediately ordered Mahal to be brought before him. "Wert thou not," said Zobar, "my spouse's father,

father, I would have thee stoned to death. Get thee hence from my dominions; thou wilt not thrive at my court, nor in Irad. Thou art a stupid, worthless thing, and wilt remain so for ever. A man like thee might corrupt all my people! A man like thee is not worth his keep! My treasurer shall give thee a few favours of the god thou disregardedst, and then go to those fools that resemble thee!"

Mabal. I shake the dust off my feet, that I may carry nothing with me from this accursed city. Long have I lingered amidst this outcast nation. I despise thee, thy gold, and thy subjects, and implore on you all the vengeance of the true God, which is drawing nigh.

Sultan Zobar. I laugh at the contempt of a worthless thing, and only dread

dread poverty. Be gone, be gone ! Should the Iradians hear of thy blasphemy, they would kill both thee and me ; for, powerful as I am, I dare not screen heretics from their just vengeance.

At these words the Sultan roughly pushed him out of doors, and Mahal raved with passion at not being allowed to reply. He was, however, obliged patiently to put up with the treatment he had received. Previous to his departure he wanted at least to give a last good lesson to his daughter, but she was not to be spoke with. He therefore left the palace, firmly resolved to return through the ravaged empire of Enoch to the old mountain. But on his way from the court, some armed men seized and carried him to the sea-shore, where they committed him to the care of a captain,

captain, whose ship was ready to set sail.

This will show you, Lord of Believers, that monarchs had recourse before the flood to the same means which they have used ever since, to get rid of those that are in their way.

Ben Hafi now rolled up his manuscript, and left the presence of the Caliph and his court.

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END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

